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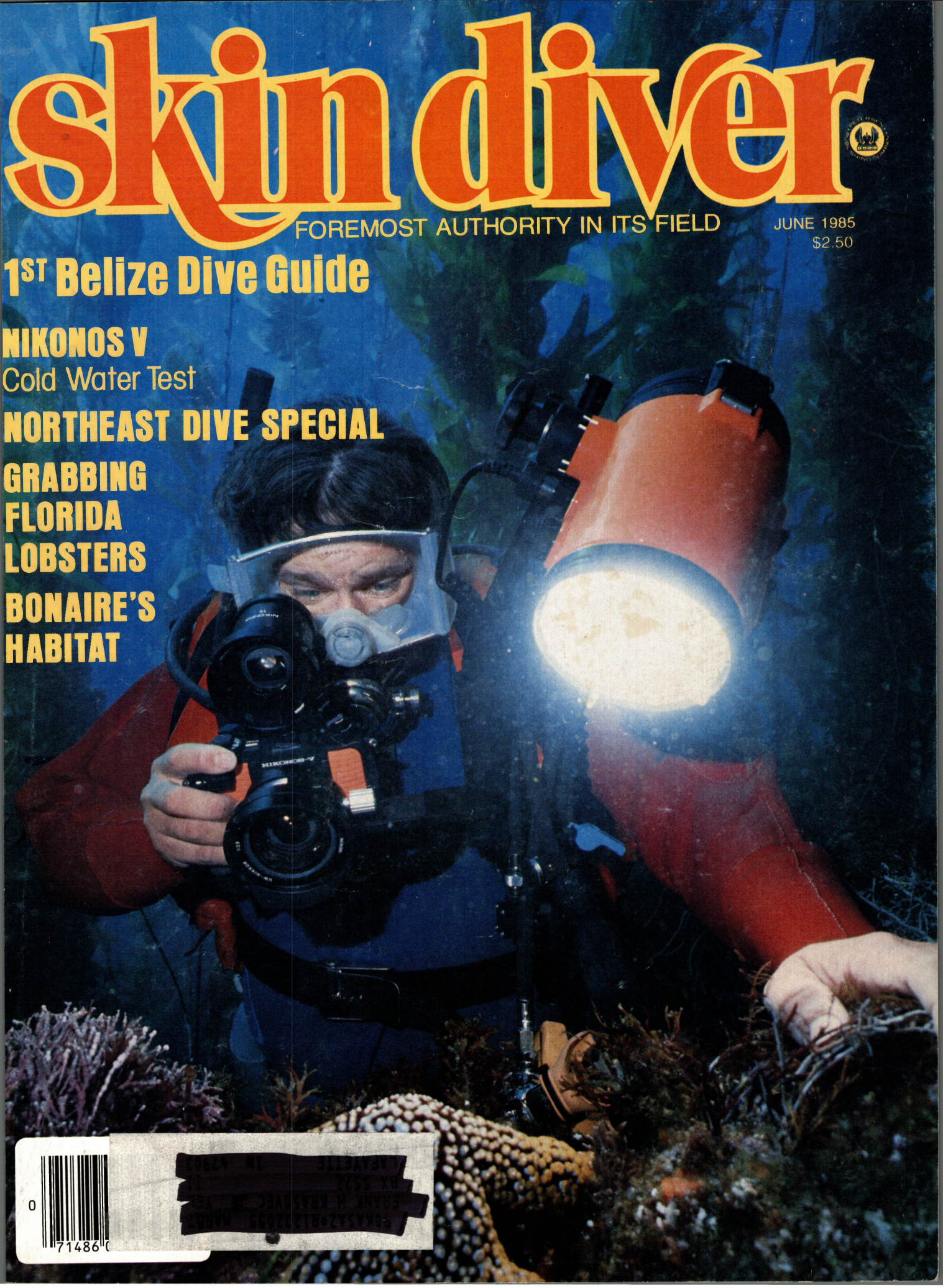
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skin diver
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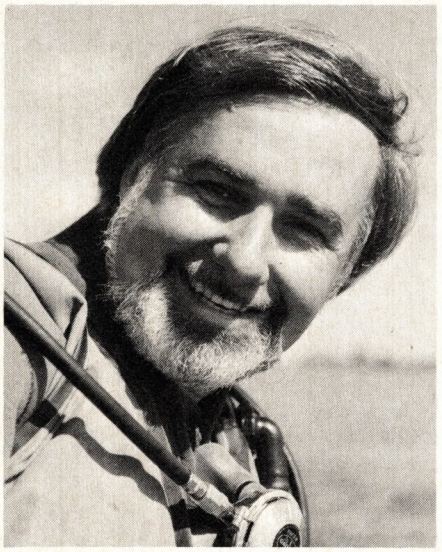


COVER
Sue Drafahl photographed her husband Jack in a kelp bed off Santa Barbara Island, California, while he used the Nikonos V camera. The Drafahls put this camera through some tough tests—see page 44.

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SDM Editorial

BY THE PUBLISHER



GET THE FAT OUT

Most Americans are overfat. This condition comes with age and too much of the good life. It has become a national disease. There is a difference between overfat and overweight. If you are overweight, you are probably overfat as well. However, you can be overfat without being overweight.

As we grow older, we become more sedentary and less inclined to exercise. The pressures of work and family life help to create a non-exercise rut. At age 20 the average athletic male has a body fat content of approximately 20 percent. This is ideal. By age 40, the same male has a body fat content of 30 percent and it gets worse as time goes on. Muscle tissue diminishes and the fat expands.

Since half the readers of SKIN DIVER are over the age of 30, it is logical to suspect that overfatness could be a major problem. If you are overfat, there is a good chance you are unfit for strenuous physical activity. This includes diving.

There are many medical problems connected with overweight and overfat—including diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, etc. We won't go into these at this time. But, here is how overfat can directly affect your diving:

Fat floats. Toss a pat of margarine into a bowl of water and you will see that it floats. Margarine is almost pure fat, just like the fat cells in your body. When a diver becomes overfat there is a greater tendency to float. Overfat divers always seem to have difficulty descending or staying down in shallow water. This extra effort uses more energy and results in greater fatigue. The net result is the need for more lead weight.

The amount of lead on most weightbelts increases over the years. Some divers I know wear in excess of 30 pounds of lead. This kind of load exerts greatest stress when the diver is exiting the water or moving around on the boat deck or beach. This stress can result in back aches or increased fatigue.

Another possible side effect of this increased weightbelt load is the risk of muscle strain or injury to joints. Divers carrying too much weight are easily thrown off balance on a rocking boat and can cause themselves (and others) injury. Shed the fat and you can shed the extra lead on your weightbelt.

Another major diving problem connected with fat is the bends. It has often been stated in medical literature that there is a direct correlation between the risk of bends and being overfat.

The U.S. Navy Diving Manual states that fatty tissue in the body will absorb about five times as much nitrogen as will watery tissues. An overfat diver will absorb a great deal more nitrogen than a lean diver and thus become an overloaded fizz bomb waiting to go off.

Since an overfat diver is likely to be out of condition, this person's circulatory system may not be functioning at 100 percent. Blood circulation is critical to removing the dissolved nitrogen from the fat tissue and preventing the formation of bends inducing bubbles.

While we may not have all the answers, it seems reasonable to conclude that the reduction of fat and improvement of physical fitness can reduce the chance of getting the bends.

The best way to eliminate overfat is exercise. You can reduce overweight by diet, but it takes muscle activity to eliminate overfat.

The best type of exercise for overfat is aerobic. The most common types of aerobic exercise include walking, jogging, bicycling, running, rowing, cross-country skiing, jumping rope, roller skating or dancing. Activities that do not qualify as aerobic include tennis, golf, racketball, weightlifting, etc.

In order to be aerobic, the exercise must be sustained for a minimum of 12 to 20 minutes. It is 12 minutes for the most strenuous forms (running) and 20 minutes for the milder forms (walking). The length of time is the most important aspect of the exercise.

Aerobic exercise improves the fat burning efficiency of your muscles. Other benefits include improved circulatory and respiratory performance and the direct burning off of a few calories.

If you are interested in getting the fat out of your body and beginning an exercise program that will produce the desired effect, buy yourself a copy of the book *Fit or Fat?* by Covert Bailey. This excellent 107 page booklet is available in paperback form and sells for $5.95. It is published by the Houghton Mifflin Company and is available in book stores.

Next, start your own simple program of regular exercise three to four times per week. If you feel totally out of shape, begin with walking for 20 minutes. As the weeks go on, increase your walking pace to maximum speed and then increase the duration of your walk from 20 to 30 minutes or more.

In the meantime, see your doctor for a complete physical check-up before embarking on a more strenuous program of aerobics. If the doc says you're OK, you can proceed with a more ambitious program of jogging, bicycling and so on.

You may also want to consider joining a health club to engage in a more formalized aerobics program under professional supervision. Exercise is always easier when done with the support of a pro and in the company of a group. The most important thing is to start now and get the fat out.

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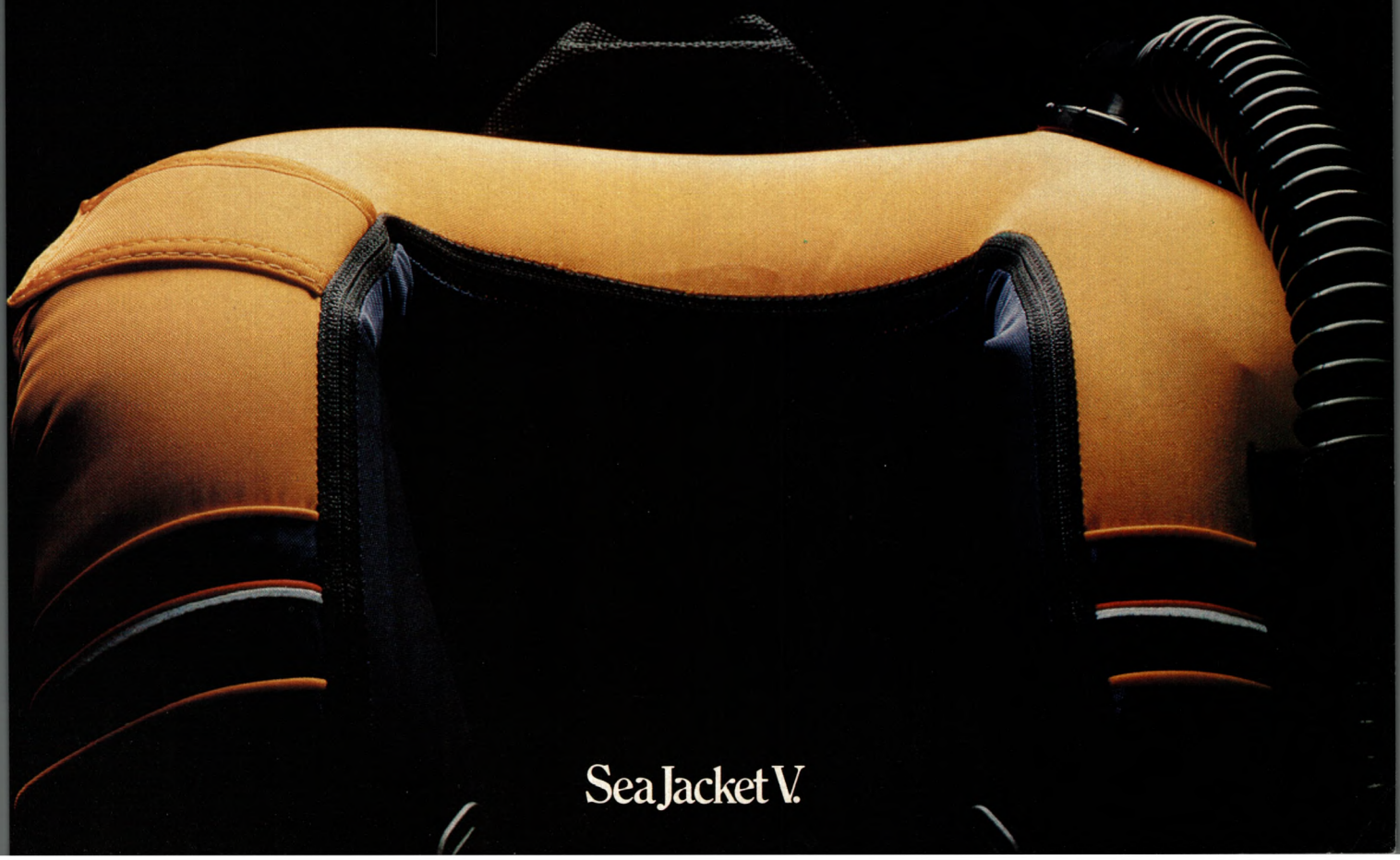
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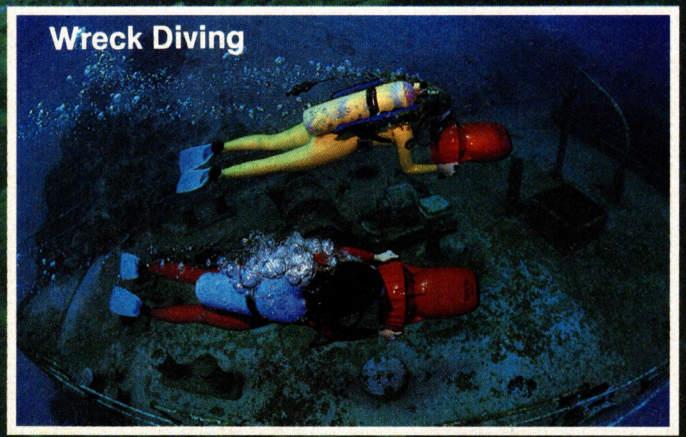
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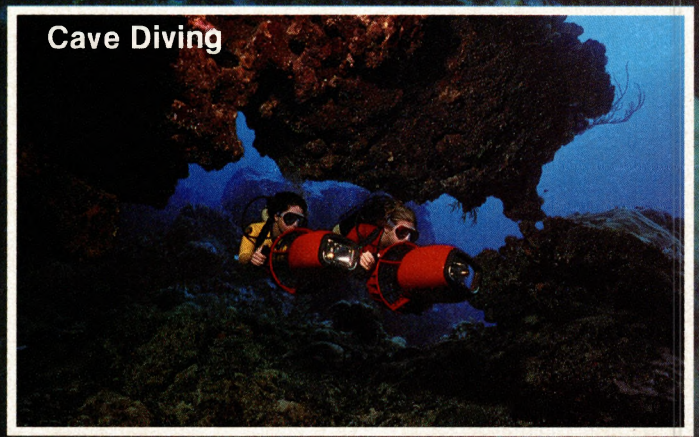
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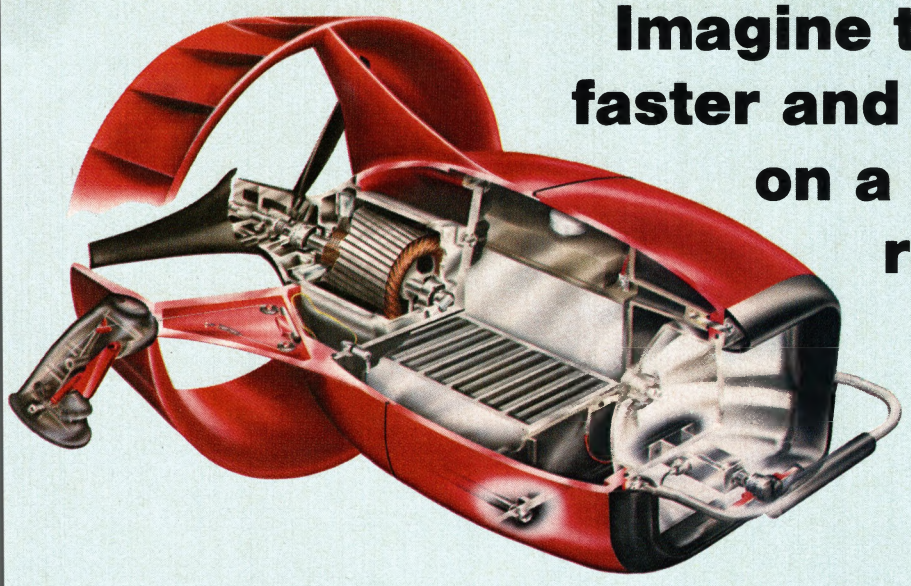
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Weight	48 lbs	48 lbs
Speed	2.1 mph*	1.4–2.8 mph*
Running Time	75 min	20–140 min
Charging Time	8–12 hrs	2–4 hrs or 8–12 hrs
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Body	Ultra high-impact Xenoy® resin

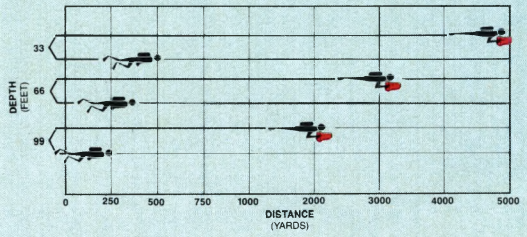
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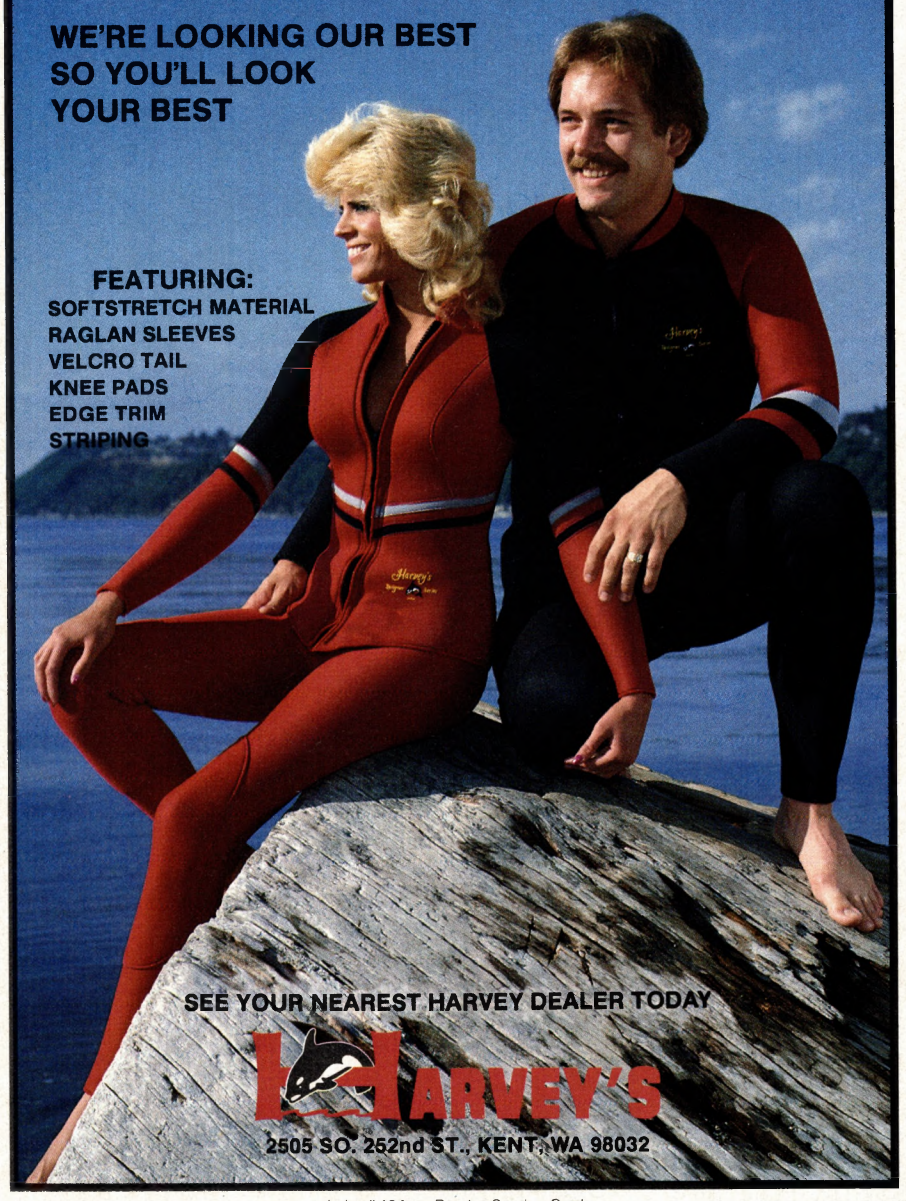
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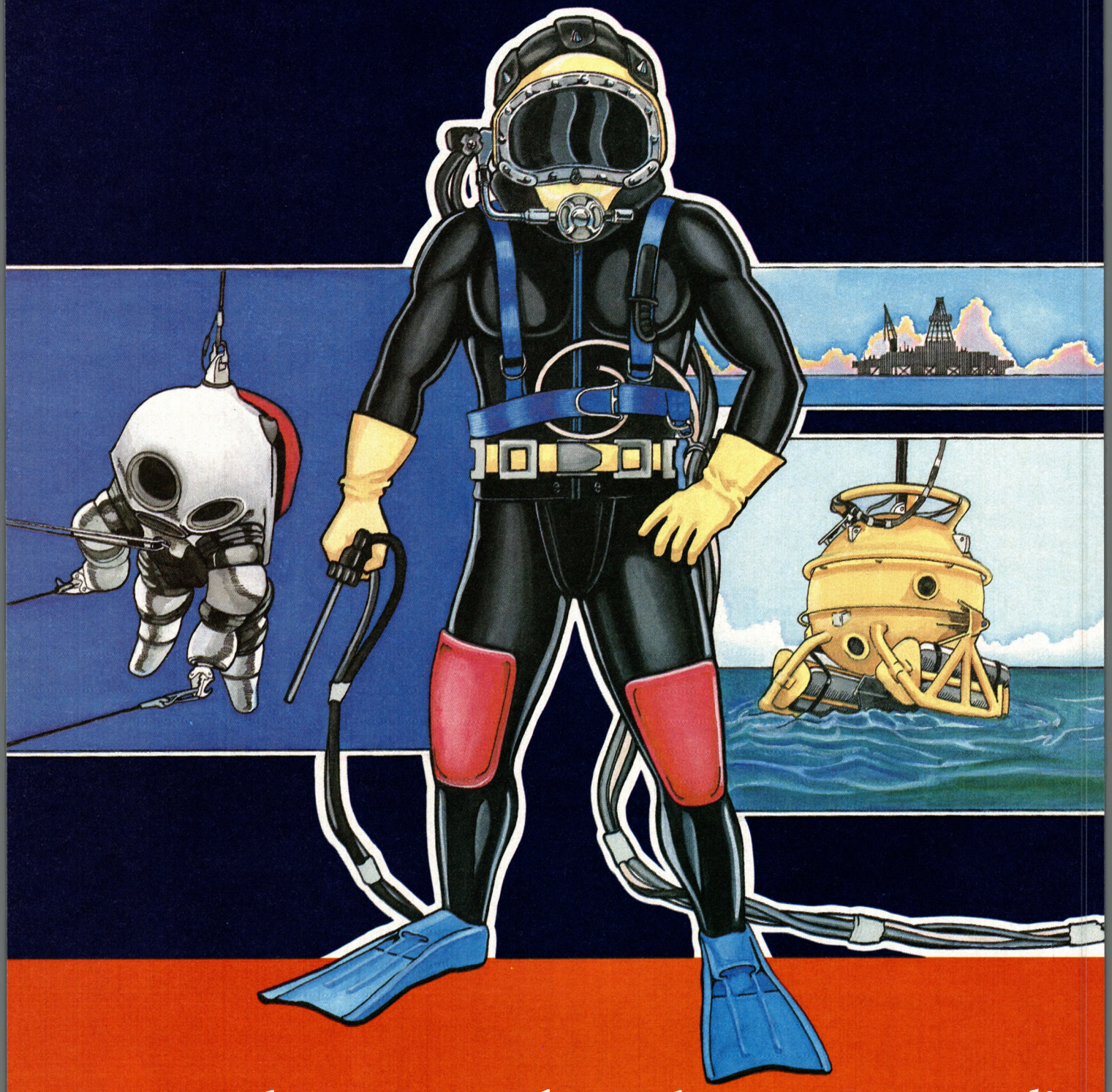
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Scuba Quiz

Category: Equipment

Topic: Weightbelts

By Dennis Graver

The weightbelt is one of the simplest items of diving equipment—or is it? A weightbelt consists of only webbing, weights and a quick release buckle; but the way these parts are configured and used by a diver can be more involved than you would expect. Do you know all you should about this simple item with complex aspects? Find out with this month's quiz. The answers are on the following page. Note: Select the most correct answer for each question.

1. The most important feature of a weightbelt is the:
- ☐ A. Amount of weight
- ☐ B. Strong nylon webbing
- ☐ C. Quick-release buckle
- ☐ D. Locking device for the weights

2. The *second* most important feature of a weightbelt is probably:
- ☐ A. Some means to compensate for exposure suit compression
- ☐ B. Locking devices to prevent shifting of the weights
- ☐ C. A distinctive buckle
- ☐ D. A distinguishing color for high visibility

3. The amount of excess strap on a buckled weightbelt should not exceed:
- ☐ A. Three inches
- ☐ B. Six inches
- ☐ C. Nine inches
- ☐ D. Twelve inches

4. The recommended procedure for donning a weightbelt out of the water is to:
- ☐ A. Hold both ends of the belt and step through it
- ☐ B. Hold one end of the belt, swing it behind and catch the free end
- ☐ C. Have your buddy position the belt and hand you the free ends
- ☐ D. None of the above

5. The correct orientation for the release on a weightbelt is:
- ☐ A. Right-handed
- ☐ B. According to the wearer's dominant hand
- ☐ C. Left-handed
- ☐ D. According to your buddy's dominant hand

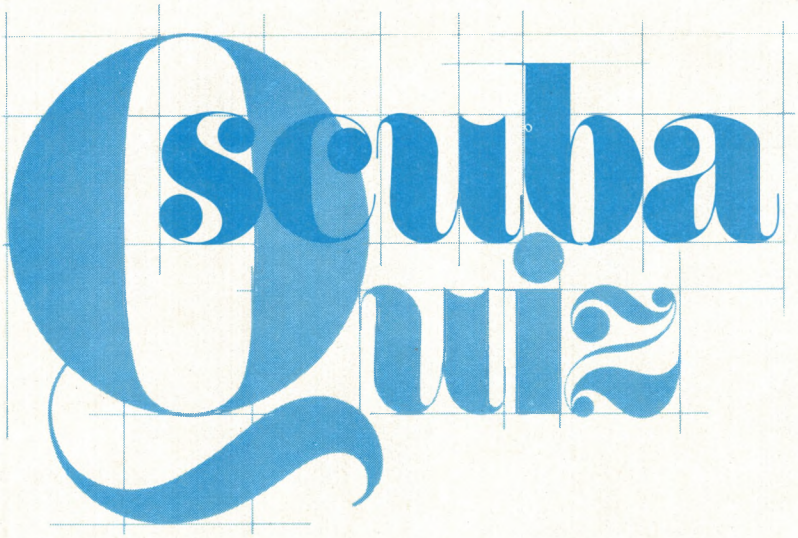
6. The ideal location for the positioning of the weights is:
- ☐ A. Equally divided and placed on each hip
- ☐ B. Equally divided and placed just forward of each hip
- ☐ C. Balanced all the way around
- ☐ D. On each hip with 10 percent more weight on the side with the stronger leg

7. The amount of weight needed for diving in fresh water is:
- ☐ A. Three percent less than that needed for saltwater diving
- ☐ B. Three percent more than that needed for saltwater diving
- ☐ C. The same as that needed for saltwater diving
- ☐ D. Three percent less than the total weight of the diver and his equipment when weighted for saltwater diving

8. Which of the following statements is incorrect:
- ☐ A. Placing a half twist in the belt as it is passed through a weight will help keep a weight from slipping
- ☐ B. An advantage of a shot-filled belt is that it does not cause damage or injury if dropped
- ☐ C. Standard duck bill buckles are more positive quick-releases than wire loop buckles
- ☐ D. When in the water a weightbelt should be held by the end without the buckle

9. Studies show that divers often do not discard the weightbelt in an emergency situation. This is most likely owing to:
- ☐ A. Incorrect wearing of the weightbelt
- ☐ B. Inability to locate the quick-release buckle
- ☐ C. Failure to take action at the first sign of trouble
- ☐ D. Inability to get the belt clear after releasing it

10. To release a weightbelt in an emergency
- ☐ A. Simply release the buckle
- ☐ B. Be sure the free end of the belt clears the buckle
- ☐ C. Pull the belt completely clear of yourself
- ☐ D. Assume a face-up position and release the buckle



Answers: Equipment—Weightbelts

1. C. Quick-release buckle. The weightbelt is used to offset positive buoyancy. In an emergency, the weights are to be discarded to achieve positive buoyancy, so a means to quickly and positively release the belt is essential. The use of homemade or makeshift quick-releases is discouraged.

2. A. Some means to compensate for exposure suit compression. A weightbelt should have a distinguishing color and a distinctive buckle is a good idea. Locking devices will prevent weights from sliding, but a half twist in the belt as it is passed through a weight can be used. Problems with the belt becoming loose owing to suit compression can only be handled properly with some means of compensation. Several means are available and one should be employed by all divers who wear thick exposure suits.

3. B. Six inches. Excess strap protruding through the buckle on a weightbelt can be hazardous because the extra material needs to clear the buckle during release. Divers also tend to tie or tuck in the excess, which can nullify the quick-release. A weightbelt should be selected that allows the length to be adjusted on the buckle end because it poses no problems to have excess strap there.

4. A. Hold both ends of the belt and step through it. You should position the belt yourself. Your buddy might place it on you incorrectly or it might be dropped while you are trying to coordinate your efforts. Grasp the end without the buckle in your right hand, the other end in your left and remain leaning forward to position the belt after you step through it.

5. A. Right-handed. There are two schools of thought on this. Some people advise orientation according to the wearer's dominant hand, but most agree a standard orientation is preferred to better facilitate removal of a belt in an emergency situation. It also helps if the tank buckle operates with a left-handed release to distinguish it from the weightbelt buckle.

6. B. Equally divided and placed just forward of each hip. The diver has a center of buoyancy and the idea is to balance the weight around this to achieve stability underwater. The weight of the tank tends to roll the diver over, so placing the weights just forward of the hips helps offset this. It is also a good idea to keep the area beneath the tank clear of weights.

7. D. Three percent less than the total weight of the diver and his equipment when weighted for saltwater diving. You are buoyed up by a force equal to the weight of the water displaced. If you and your gear—including 18 pounds of lead—weigh 192 pounds (neutral saltwater diving), you displace three cubic feet of water (192/64). In fresh water you displace only 187 pounds of water (62.4 x 3), so you require only 13 pounds of lead (192 - 187 = 5 pounds less). Since fresh water is roughly three percent less dense than salt water, you can quickly calculate the required change by subtracting three percent of your total saltwater diving weight.

8. C. Standard duck bill buckles are more positive quick-releases than wire loop buckles. Wire loop buckles are not popular because they make it more difficult to change weights on a belt. However, they are excellent quick-releases and should be considered by divers who seldom make changes on weightbelts.

9. C. Failure to take action at the first sign of trouble. The time between a difficulty and an emergency is often quite short and in an emergency a diver's hands tend to come up to a dog-paddling position. If this occurs, a diver will not bring the hands back down to release the belt. As soon as you confirm a problem as being potentially serious, the weightbelt should be removed. It is better to recover it later than to have an accident.

10. C. Pull the belt completely clear of yourself. During rescue workshops we have experimented with weightbelt ditching and have discovered that belts are much harder to remove than would be imagined. It is necessary to pull them completely clear when ditching them. Practice this in shallow water.

Weightbelts are a primary safety item, but are not used as such as often as they should be. Many problems result from the belts because they are not set up correctly. Are your weights balanced and positioned correctly? Are they locked into place? If you wear a thick exposure suit, do you use a compensating belt? How much excess strap do you have? Do you always wear a right-handed buckle? Do you dive overweighted? Have you practiced ditching your weightbelt recently? These are important questions for you to answer correctly.

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Wreck Facts

BY ELLSWORTH BOYD

Even Fluff, the fearless, sometimes intimidating Pekingese pet of Mrs. Mollie Wilmot, panicked when the 200 foot freighter slammed into the retaining wall and deposited its bow in the family's beachfront swimming pool. The maid, dressed prim and proper and acting as a maid should in a fashionable Palm Beach villa once featured in Town and Country Magazine, announced calmly, "Madame, we have visitors."

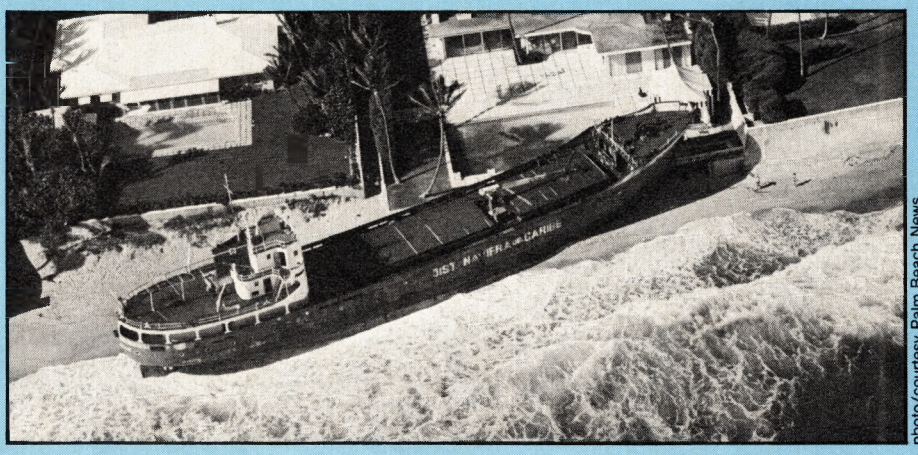
"Visitors from outer space!" says Mrs. Wilmot. "That's what it looked like—a scene from *Star Wars*! Little men were scrambling over the side of this 500 ton mass of metal with Spanish words printed on its side."

It was Spanish all right—Venezuelan to be exact—and the "little men" were the crew of the cargo ship, *Mercedes*, abandoning their vessel for fear of fire or further collision. A cargo carrier that usually calls at Caribbean ports with foodstuffs and assorted provisions, the *Mercedes* was blown off course in a turbulent sea, lost all engines and drifted into Mrs. Wilmot's seawall and swimming pool.

"Just another Mercedes in the community," cracked a local gendarme who admitted that the ship was marooned in one of the world's wealthiest neighborhoods. It wasn't long before the Coast Guard; state, local and marine police; reporters; sightseers; boats and helicopters swarmed over the oceanfront, an area that prides itself on seclusion.

Adding to the irony is Mrs. Wilmot's next door neighbor, none other than Rose Kennedy, whose North Ocean Boulevard beachfront estate went unscathed—even to the extreme of the wreck not obstructing her view. "Intrude on the Kennedys?" Mrs. Wilmot smiled. "It wouldn't dare!"

It took over two months for the Florida State Legislature and local politicians to decide what funds to use to remove a derelict with no insurance. An abandoned Mercedes had never before been a problem in Palm Beach!



photo/courtesy Palm Beach News

JAVA WRECK

Boyd Van Den Kieboom, who works in Jakarta, Selatan, Indonesia, took a trip with his son to an island called Papa Theo in the Java Sea. They explored a wreck in 70 feet off the east side of the island and brought back interesting conversation pieces. Boyd writes: "The *Teluk Jaya* was a 1,050 ton steel vessel flying the Indonesian flag, sailing from Jakarta to Sumatra when it struck the reef in a storm four years ago. Its cargo consisted of air conditioning units, Honda motorcycles, spare parts, Penguin Books and umbrellas. The air conditioners and motorcycles have been salvaged, but my son and I each retrieved an umbrella. These trophies have Japanese writing on one part of the handle and English on another. The English says, 'Waterproof!' I am trying to research other wrecks in the area."

Joe Grabowski, 2400 Kingston Drive, Miramar, FL 33023, says he has organized a group of divers called Lost and Found. Joe writes: "We have researched wrecks in South Florida, some under the sea and others beneath the beach. Our group consists of sport divers and non-divers who are interested in research and history. The group is open to all people who seek the challenge and adventure of discovery." Contact Joe at the above address if you are interested in joining.

I wish they had Scubascouts when I was a boy. Scoutmaster Barton Schell, Troop 90, Whitehouse, Ohio, says that many of his boys have obtained wreck diving certification and explored shipwrecks in various parts of the United States. They are all interested in research, especially on one ship—the *Westmoreland* in Lake Michigan. Barton and his Scubascouts might be interested in a listing from *A Guide to Sunken Ships in American Waters*: "Steamer *Westmoreland*, sank March 2, 1865, with specie, whiskey and copper aboard. The loss was estimated at $95,000. See Charts 7 and 70, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers." Chart 70 plots the north end of Lake Michigan and Green Bay, while Chart 7 depicts Lake Michigan, including Green Bay. There is another *Westmoreland* sunk off Cincinnati in 1869, therefore the boys will have to be careful not to confuse the two. They will find many more research opportunities if they order: *Great Lakes Maritime History: Bibliography and Sources of Information* by Charles and Jeri Feltner, Seajay Publications, Box 2176, Dearborn, MI 48123. A field trip to the Milwaukee Public Library would be exciting for the Scubascouts. The Runge File there contains one of the greatest collections of histories of Great Lakes wrecks in the United States.

Peter Miller, Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, New York, is hearing bells and the sounds are coming all the way from South America. Peter says: "Our New Windsor Historical Society in upstate New York learned that police in Beaumont, Texas had recovered a ship's bell in a drug raid. Since the bell was inscribed, "Dedicated to the *New Windsor* by the people of New Windsor," Texas authorities returned it to New Windsor where it is now displayed in a local park.

(Continued on Page 68)

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DIVING MEDICINE

BY ALFRED A. BOVE, M.D., Ph.D.

Of the many things we need to sustain life, the most important is oxygen. Deprived of it, the brain can function for only about a minute and the heart will fail in a few minutes. The development of diving was dependent upon the discovery of methods and equipment for delivering oxygen to the diver underwater.

Oxygen was discovered by Priestly in 1774. Before that time, numerous theories existed about air and its role in sustaining life. Since Priestly's discovery, we have learned much about the air we breath, its gaseous content and how one can obtain air to breathe while diving.

Oxygen makes up about 20 percent of air, the rest, for practical purposes, is nitrogen, but small amounts of carbon dioxide, neon, xenon, argon and krypton are also present. In diving we are concerned about increased partial pressure of nitrogen because of nitrogen narcosis and decompression sickness, but what about the oxygen? Unfortunately, like all good things there are dangers in the extremes of oxygen usage.

HYPOXIA

Breathing low concentrations of oxygen causes a condition called hypoxia in which tissues and organs of the body malfunction. The most important malfunction occurs in the brain where giddiness, loss of judgement and finally unconsciousness occurs. Gases with oxygen contents of less than 12 percent are dangerous. Above that (13-17 percent for example) we will notice difficulty in exercising, but there is little concern for survival in healthy individuals. It is possible to acclimatize to low oxygen and the best example of this occurs in people who live at high altitudes. There are adaptive changes in the body that compensate for the reduced amount of oxygen at high altitudes. At altitude, the problem is not the percent of oxygen (it is still about 20 percent); rather, the absolute pressure may be reduced to one-half atmosphere or less and at this low absolute pressure, for example above 15,000 feet, the partial pressure of oxygen may be equivalent to a 10 percent oxygen mixture at sea level. Traveling to these high altitudes can be dangerous for those not accustomed to the low oxygen partial pressure.

Hypoxia in diving can occur from a variety of accidents. If air is trapped in a closed space, for example in a cave or wreck underwater, the oxygen can be slowly removed from the air by oxidation of metal, by action of living marine organisms or simply by rebreathing of the air by divers. It is wise to never remove your regulator when entering one of these air spaces because the effects of hypoxia can be so sudden you will not have time to put the regulator back in your mouth.

Breath-hold diving can cause hypoxia if you hyperventilate excessively, then do a long free dive. During the dive, oxygen is consumed from the lungs, until the partial pressure is quite low. (Example of a 33 foot dive: 33 feet = 2 ATM x 0.2 = 0.4 ATM partial pressure of oxygen in the lungs at the start of the dive, which can fall to 0.1 ATM at 33 feet after a long free dive.) Returning to the surface will abruptly lower the oxygen partial pressure as the ambient pressure falls. (Example from above: 0.1 ATM partial pressure of oxygen in the lungs will suddenly drop to 0.05 ATM partial pressure on ascent from 33 feet to the surface.) The sudden reduction in oxygen partial pressure will cause a blackout at shallow depths and free divers have been known to drown while unconscious. Shallow water blackout is avoided by not hyperventilating excessively before a breath-hold dive.

Other causes of hypoxia in diving are: using the wrong gas mixture (100 percent nitrogen, 100 percent helium, for example), entrapment underwater without an air supply or running out of air. For sport scuba diving, careful diving techniques and good training should eliminate hypoxia as a problem.

HYPEROXIA

Surprisingly, too much oxygen is also dangerous. There are several toxic effects produced by excess oxygen. Most of these occur under increased pressure and are related to diving. It has been known for many years that 100 percent oxygen (pure oxygen) is a dangerous breathing gas for diving. Below 60 feet, breathing pure oxygen will rapidly lead to epileptic-like seizures. If oxygen is not removed, the diver will continue to have seizures and will eventually drown. The safe maximum partial pressure of oxygen currently accepted in diving is 2.8 ATM or 60 feet equivalent depth. This later was chosen after extensive research on oxygen toxicity. We can successfully treat decompression sickness and air embolism at 60 feet in a recompression chamber using pure oxygen to help remove nitrogen and to provide oxygen to tissues damaged by the bubbles. There should also be a pure oxygen supply on your dive boat to provide early oxygen therapy of DCS and air embolism on the surface, while transporting the victim to a chamber. Under no circumstances should a scuba tank be filled with 100 percent oxygen. Inadvertent use of pure oxygen for scuba diving is almost guaranteed to produce a fatality.

Increased oxygen can also damage the lungs. Inhalation of pure oxygen at sea level (one atmosphere) will produce evidence of lung damage within 12-18 hours. The injury will progress until severe lung damage results. Lung injury does not occur from oxygen exposures in sport scuba diving.

QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

Question: I noted a diver died while diving in an area where dynamite fishing was going on. Did the explosions have anything to do with his death?

Answer: The effect of underwater explosives on the human body was thoroughly researched during World War II because of the large number of deaths and injuries that occurred when sailors, abandoning a sinking warship, were in the water when bombs exploded near them.

The injuries that occurred were to the lungs and the intestines. An explosion causes a very rapid wave of positive, then negative pressure. The negative pressure wave causes severe lung damage (similar to lung damage in air embolism) and can also cause rupture of the intestines. Divers exposed to underwater blasts usually die of lung injuries. The danger zone for the blast varies, depending on the size of the explosive and whether there are any protective structures that can shadow the divers from the direct pressure wave. I could not provide you with details of the danger zone in the case you presented because of the variables I have mentioned.

It is certain that an underwater dynamite explosion can kill divers if they are close to the blast.

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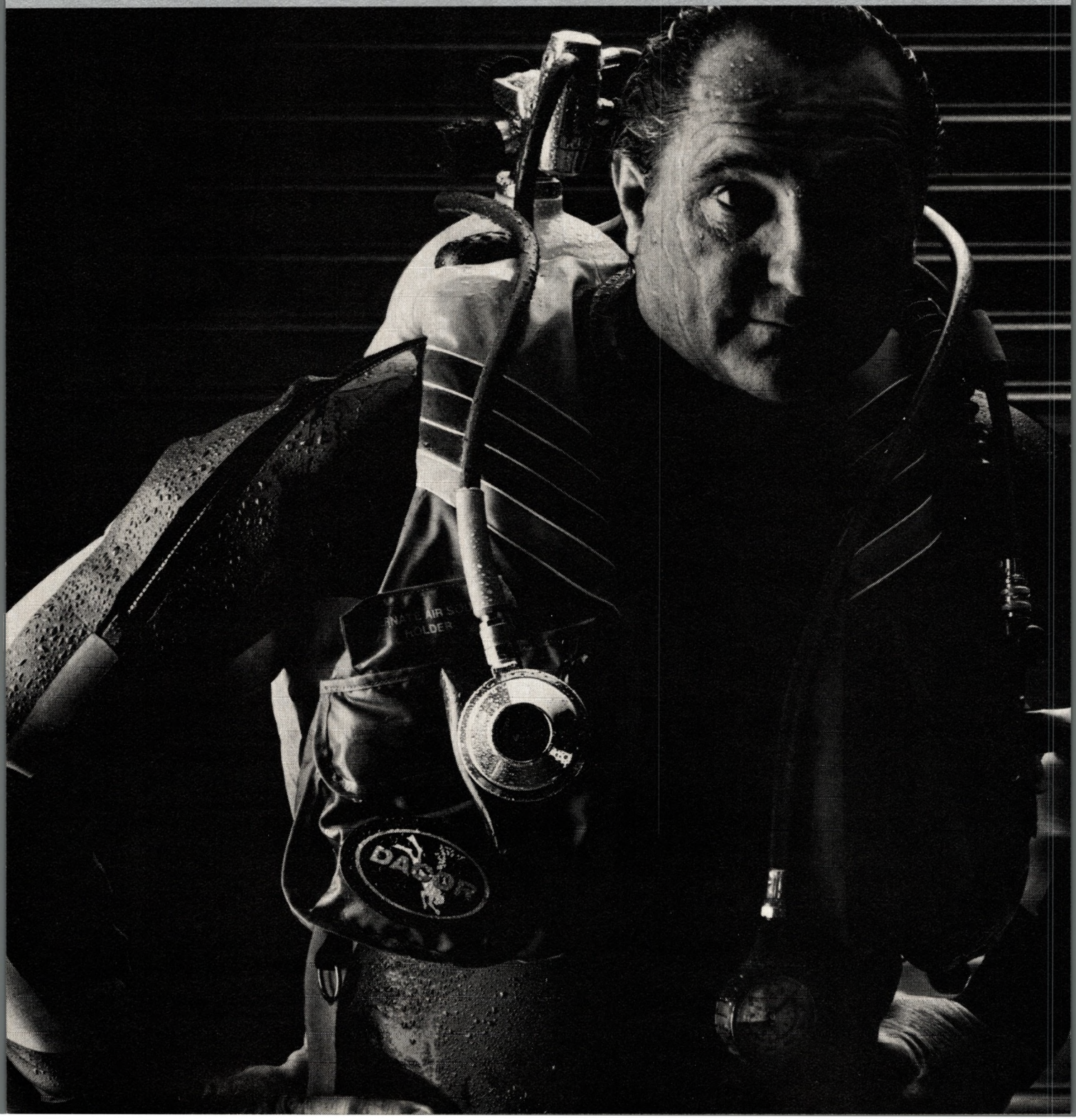
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Diver's Calendar

June 1 DART Diver Day at Beals Point, Folsom Lake State Park, east of Sacramento, CA. Diving skills competition with T-shirts for entrants and prizes for top finishers. Entry fee is $25 for individuals, $42 for two diver teams. Proceeds benefit Drowning Accident Rescue Team (DART). (Contact: DART, P.O. Box 711, Elk Grove, CA 95624)

June 1-2 The Eighth Annual Miracle Strip Open Spearfishing Tournament sponsored by the Panama City Dive Club. Hosted by the Treasure Ship, Panama City Beach, FL. (Contact: PCDC, Inc., P.O. Box 4636, Panama City, FL 32401)

June 14 Start of an Advanced Diving Program offered by the L.A. County Underwater Instructors Association. (Contact: L.A. County Department of Parks and Recreation, 419 E. 192nd St., Carson, CA 90745)

June 15 Atlantean Underwater Society's Third Annual Trash 'N Treasure Dive, at Lake Tenkiller, Gore, Oklahoma. (Contact: AUS, 6229 Kingsbridge, Oklahoma City, OK 73132; (405) 722-3692)

June 15 Los Angeles celebration of the 50th anniversary of the maiden voyage of the ocean liner *Normandie* (New York celebration is in early June). Sponsored by the Ocean Navigation Research Society, Inc. at the Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles, CA. (Contact: ONRS, Inc., P.O. Box 8005, Universal City, CA 91608-0005; (818) 985-1345)

June 16 Seamark 1985, a diver sponsored underwater treasure hunt/fund raiser for the Cotting School for Handicapped Children, at Great Island Common, Newcastle, NH. (Contact: Kathleen E. Simon, Chairman Seamark Treasure Hunt, 51 Willow Ave., Winthrop, MA 02152; (617) 846-7191)

June 20-23 Sea Ventures Expo, featuring films, seminars and exhibits for scuba diving, boardsailing, surfing, waterskiing, power boating and other watersports, will be held at the San Jose Convention Center. (Contact: (213) 316-6140)

June 23-30 California Police Olympics will be held in Oxnard, CA. Games will feature 44 sports events. 5,000 male and female police officers will compete and spectators (free) are welcome. (Contact: Bill Lewis, Police Olympic Chairman (805) 984-4718)

June 30-July 3 International Symposium on Hyperbaric Oxygen in Critical Care Medicine, Aviya-Sonesta Hotel, Eilat, Israel. Sponsored by the Israeli Naval Hyperbaric Institute. Lectures, discussions, cruises and tours. (Contact: Kopel Tours Ltd., Box 4413, 61044, Tel Aviv, Israel)

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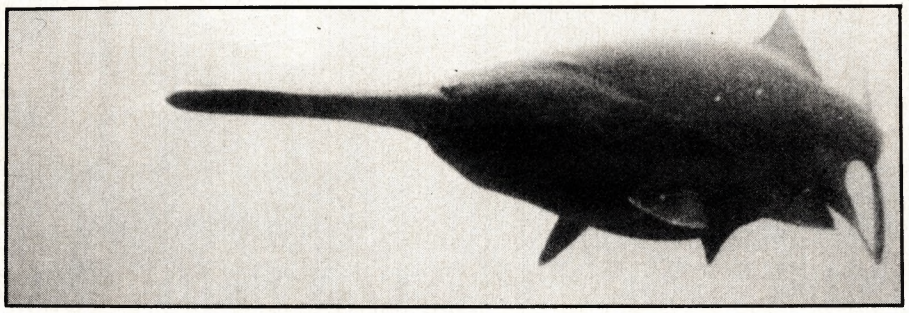
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Rare & Endangered SPOONBILL
Alive And Well In Midwest Quarry

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK DANIELS



As the summer dive season passes and the Great Lakes become even less predictable than usual, Midwest divers opt for dive sites that are less vulnerable to the whims of the elements. One such place is a quarry in north central Indiana called France Park. With visibility at its best in the fall, divers are sometimes confronted by an apparition; a large streamlined shadow gliding into view, steadily moving through the water with graceful beats of a scythe-shaped tail. A little closer and divers note the grayish, scaleless skin and elongated bill.

The apparition is real—it is *Polyodon spathula*, better known as the paddlefish, spoonbill catfish or just plain spoonbill.

Spoonbills are harmless, nonaggressive filter feeders; they don't even have teeth except in juvenile stages. Despite spoonbills' superficial resemblance, they are not related to sharks. Nor are they related to the gars, as the characteristic bill might suggest. The spoonbills' closest relatives are the sturgeons (indeed, if one examines a sturgeon closely, one notes an extended, bill-like upper jaw).

Spoonbills are rare and endangered river dwellers adapted to filtering their meals of microscopic plankton from the water. Not only are they rare, they're not even supposed to be in a quarry. Local stories have it that the spoonbills were stocked in France Park by state conservation officials. It appears these ancient immigrants have thrived; population estimates range to 14 spoonbills, with the largest being seven feet long.

Rather than the sighting of a spoonbill being a testimony to the individual diver's stealth or underwater tracking ability, one senses that these fish *allow* you to see them. Should a spoonbill tire of divers struggling to keep up with it, it can easily outdistance them. Nevertheless, the spoonbills show such tolerance of divers that you can sometimes swim alongside for 10-20 minutes at a time.

Finally, there's the dramatic nature of the sighting itself. You don't so much sight a spoonbill and swim over to it as you would, for example, a coral head or sleeping ray. Rather, you turn your head and one drifts into view or just sort of appears. In fact, as most divers are accustomed to looking straight ahead or down during a dive, it's often simply a matter of looking up while swimming as (at least in late fall) spoonbills cruise at a depth of about five to eight feet. The word cruise is apt; they seem to be always moving.

Sighting the spoonbill is, for some, like a trip back in time. For as long as you follow and observe it, your mind is cleared of everything but the effortless motion of the fish and the still silence of the water. If summer must end, the experience of sighting the spoonbill is ample compensation.



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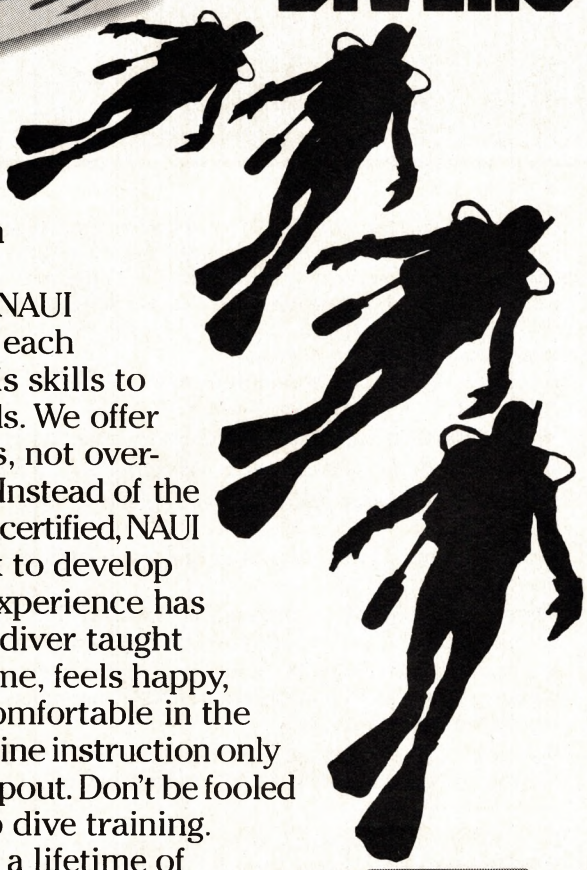
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Film Festivals 'n Symposiums

SEASPACE '85

A door prize drawing will be held at the Saturday night film festival at Seaspace '85, June 21-23, Shamrock Hilton Hotel, Houston, Texas. A Tekna DV-3X diver propulsion vehicle is the prize. The door prize drawing at the Sunday film festival will be for a Blue Water wetsuit.

In addition to the Robert L. Straight awards, prizes will be given to the first place winners in the Seaspace Underwater Photo Contest. These include a Nikonos V camera; one week land package at the Tamarijn Beach Hotel, Aruba, N.A.; one week land package at the Flamingo Beach Hotel and Casino, Bonaire, N.A.; one week land package at the Tiara Beach Hotel, Cayman Brac; Oceanic 3000 TTL strobe; Flower Gardens dive trip; and five nights lodging and diving at the Divers Inn, Cozumel, Mexico.

A selection of the winning photos from the Seaspace '85 Photo Contest will be published in SKIN DIVER Magazine and the winning U/W video will be aired on the Scuba World TV program.

Jim and Cathy Church will present an eight hour seminar on Sunday, June 23. The class will be limited to 120 and tuition will include entrance to Saturday's Seaspace seminars at no extra charge. For reservations, please write to Church Seminar, c/o Houston Underwater Club, P.O. Box 3753, Houston, Texas 77253-3753.

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Nikon Inc. has formed a network of highly qualified independent regional sales representatives to exclusively distribute the Nikonos underwater camera system to dive retail outlets.

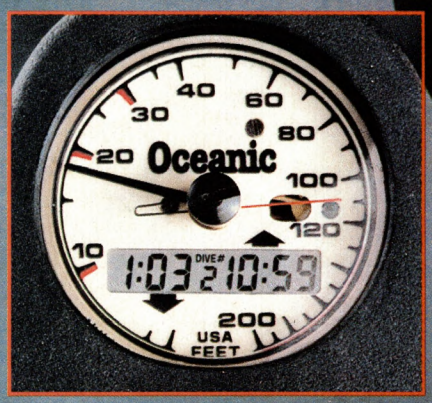
For the address of the sales representative in your area contact Nikon Inc., 623 Stewart Ave., Garden City, New York 11530.

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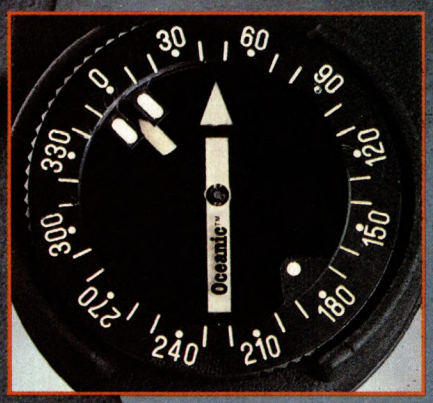
Gale and Sylvia Livers of Ikelite Underwater Systems will teach an underwater photography course at Chub Cay Resort in the Bahamas, September 29-October 5 and October 6-12. The course will include hands-on experience with the Nikonos or housed cameras and is designed to produce results for both beginning and advanced photographers. Modeling and disc photography courses will be available for buddies not enrolled in the formal course.

For more information contact Gale Livers, P.O. Box 88719, Indianapolis, IN 46208, telephone (317) 253-8541; or AT Reef Ventures (800) 327-7333 or (800) 327-0787.

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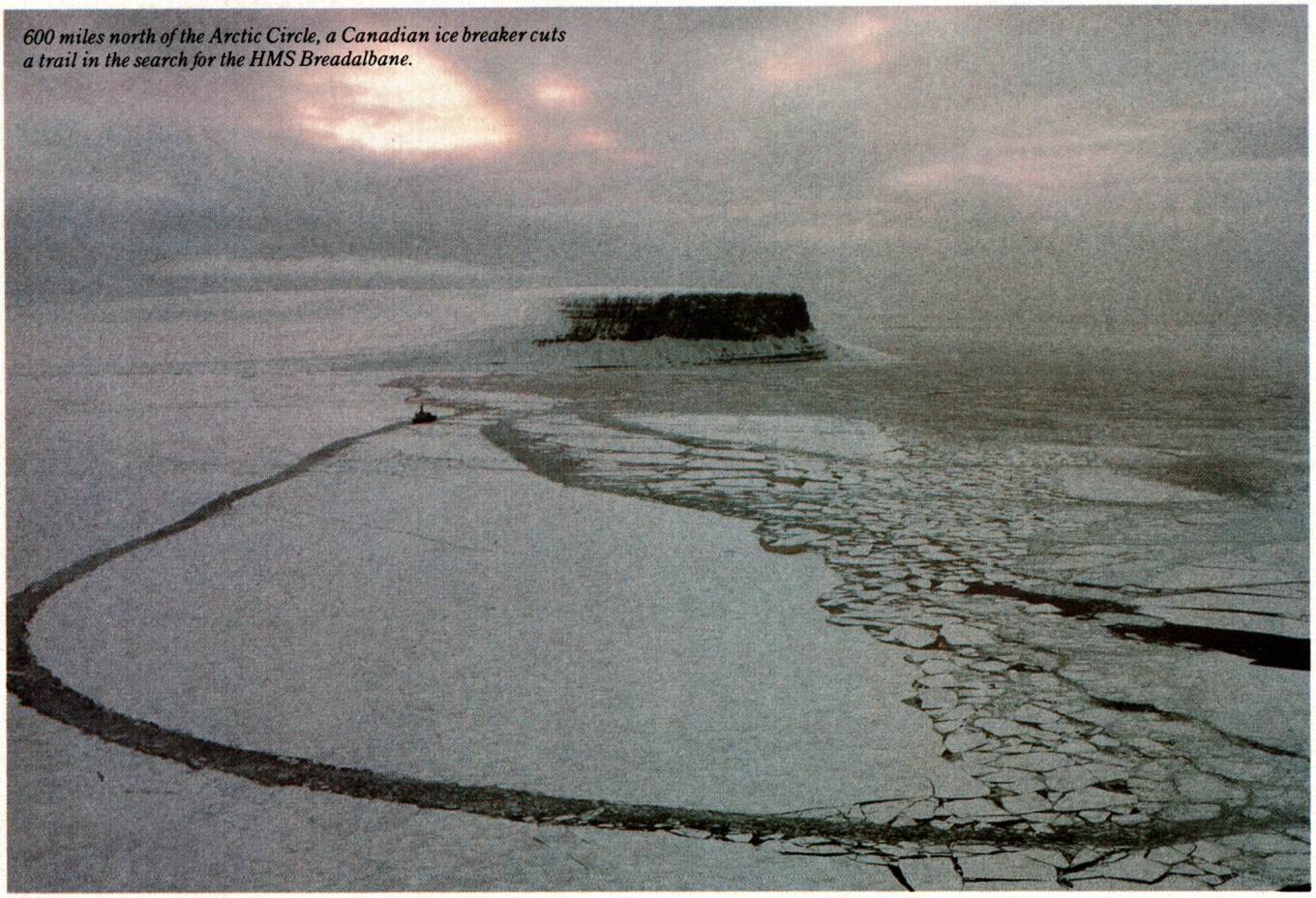
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600 miles north of the Arctic Circle, a Canadian ice breaker cuts a trail in the search for the HMS Breadalbane.

Searching for a shipwreck under the Arctic ice is not for ordinary divers. Or ordinary watches.

Temperatures reach 50° below zero. The wind chill factor: −100°F. Ice floes are a constant hazard.

For Dr. Joe MacInnis, the conditions were perfect.

In this hostile world lay a unique treasure: the HMS Breadalbane, a three-masted British barque lost in 1853 during the search for the Northwest Passage. MacInnis was determined to find her.

Using delicate sonar, he was able to pinpoint the location of the vessel 340 feet below the surface, near Beechey Island. Divers discovered one of the most perfectly preserved shipwrecks found in any ocean.

In the Arctic, ordinary divers find it difficult to function. So do ordinary watches. For the past 15 years, Dr. MacInnis, the first to dive and film under the North Pole, has chosen one watch: the Rolex Submariner.

"I've worn it everywhere. From the North Pole ... to the Red Sea."

As for the future, there are still more explorer ships resting on the Arctic floor.

A fitting challenge for Dr. Joe MacInnis and his Rolex.

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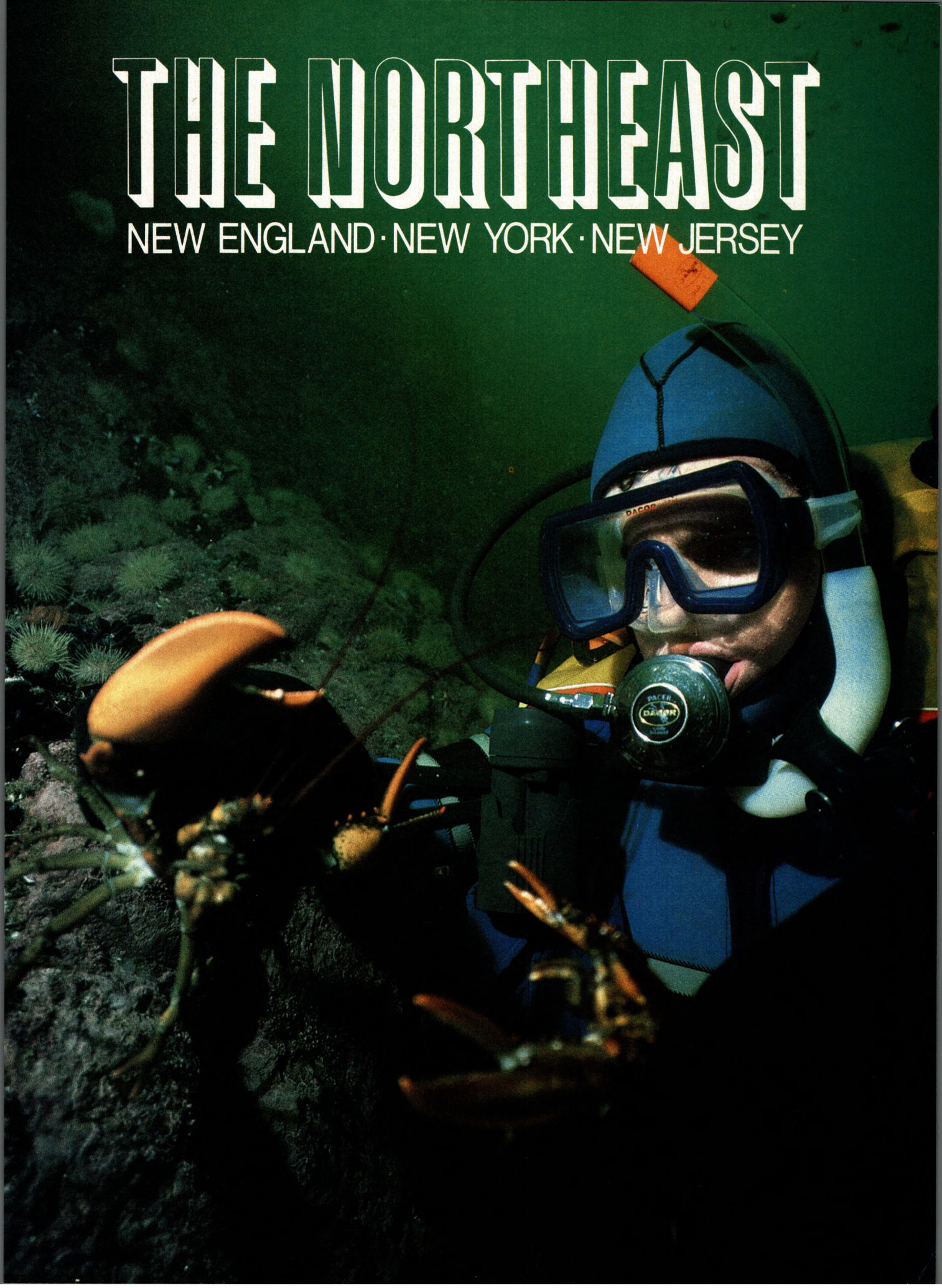
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THE NORTHEAST

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AMERICA'S NORTHEAST

From Maine To Cape May

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOE BERESWILL





Northeast diving can be deep and cold, with currents and less-than-perfect visibility, but the rewards include a variety of exciting wrecks, well equipped dive boats, big fish and lobster.









Want a vacation that's as challenging for experienced divers as it's enticing for beginners? Want it in a place that offers unlimited beach and boat diving, reef and wreck diving, world-class artifact hunting, lobstering, underwater photography and spearfishing? Want it where the whole family can relax in the sun, play on white sandy beaches or visit tourist sites all day? Do you want to enjoy nightlife as peaceful as the soft lapping of waves beneath a window or as electrifying as an Atlantic City casino? The U.S. Northeast offers all this and more! Plus, it's easily and economically reached by car, bus, air and rail.

After years of attracting and catering to the thousands of local weekend divers who consider these waters home, this area is now seeing a growing influx of out of town divers, drawn by the magnetism of diving the two gulfs, as well as the topside attractions the Northeast offers. Much of this activity is buoyed by the increasing popularity of sport diving and the rising number of dive shops, charter boat operators and resort hotels that are joining forces to provide package programs for visiting divers and their families. Make no mistake, however,

while offering all sorts of diving fun, these waters are not tropical. A quarter inch wetsuit and hood are standard gear for summer and fall diving; a drysuit provides year-round comfort and protection.

Unquestionably, a major natural phenomenon that makes this diving so unique is its two gulf currents. The Gulf Stream, which runs northeast in a clockwise direction, is known for its warm temperature and clear water. At certain times of the year this wide band of blue water shifts closer to land, where it mixes with the green North Atlantic, bringing sea turtles, whales and numerous tropical fish of all shapes, colors and sizes.

In contrast, the Gulf of Maine empties southward, from the Bay of Fundy in Nova Scotia, carrying cold water currents that move in a counterclockwise direction. The dividing line for these two gulfs, Cape Cod, often experiences temperature variances as much as 10°F between its north and south shores.

Because of its cold, clean environment and primarily rocky coastlines of northern Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine, the undersea life in the Gulf of Maine is quite different from its nearby southern neighbors. You'll find plenty of vegetation and green sea urchins mixed with massive sea anemones, purple sea stars, basketstars, lumpfish, squid and a rainbow of sponges, to mention a few. Macro photographers can have a field day positioning the different species of nudibranchs, tunicates and occasional small octopi in their camera framers.

WRECK DIVING

Within a relatively short automobile ride from these areas lies the Valley of the Wrecks, the waters of New York, New Jersey and Long Island—filled with the remains of hundreds of shipwrecks.

The commonly visited wrecks, which range from as shallow as ten feet of water to as deep as one dares to go, offer a lifetime of exploring possibilities with spectacular artifact hunting, lobstering and photography. Exciting new shipwrecks are always being discovered here.

There's a shipwreck for everyone's fancy. One can dive and explore the remnants of historic schooners, a German U-boat or a totally intact modern cargo ship. The possibilities are endless. Even treasure hunters are discovering the riches of Northeast diving! After finding and salvaging more than $4 million in rubies, golden doubloons and pieces of eight from a long lost pirate ship in the shallow waters off Cape Cod, Barry Clifford headed south to the Big Apple. He's now searching New York City's East River for one of the richest wrecks of all time, the British pay ship, the H.M.S. *Hussar*, which sank in 1780 with silver and gold valued today at more than $500 million.

Many visitors prefer to begin their Northeast diving vacations in New York. After a day in the city and night on the

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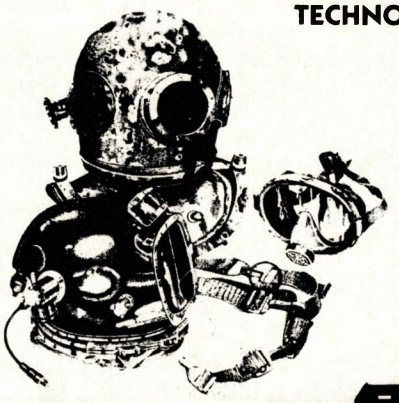
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town, it's time to think about exploring some nearby dive sites. A visit to any of the dive stores in the boroughs of New York or adjacent suburbs of Westchester, Long Island, Connecticut and New Jersey will provide dive boat charters, rental equipment and information.

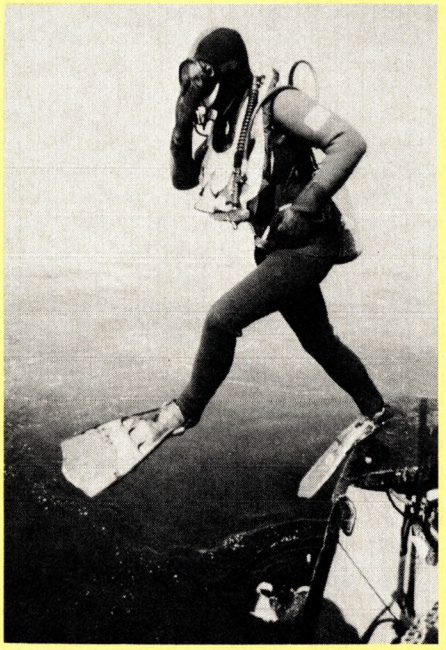
Some well known wrecks sunk just outside New York Harbor include the **Pilot** and **Ambrose Light Ships**, both in 80-90 feet of water, near the Coast Guard's Ambrose Light Tower. The latter serves as the water gateway to New York; and the two shipwrecks still offer brass portholes and other souvenirs to interested explorers. Not too far away, in 85 feet of water, lies the wreck of the ***Pinta***, a 500 ton Dutch cargo ship that sank May 8, 1963 after a collision with a British freighter. This intact vessel rests in the sand, on her side, with the bridge, masts and superstructure serving as divers' resting points.

In shallower waters, a short boat ride away, sits the ***Lizzie D***, a 1920s rumrunner that went down in 75 feet of water with its full cargo of bootlegged alcoholic beverages. Today, divers can easily pluck a souvenir bottle or two from the sands around the ship, with a lucky few bringing full, unspoiled bottles to the surface. In 60 feet of water rests the *Iberia*, a cargo ship that sank in 1888 and in 30 feet, not far from the Rockaway Beach shore, lies the ***Black Warrior***, an 1800s paddlewheel steamer that yields colorful marine life and artifacts. For an interesting shore dive in 20-30 feet of water, Rockaway Beach's Eighth and Ninth Streets provide, depending upon the time of the year, colorful sponges, sea horses and assorted tropicals.

For adventurous souls with plenty of patience and time to spare, the New Jersey Highlands and Sandy Hook shore, which overlook New York Harbor, provide excellent shallow water hunting grounds for treasure. The noted pirate, Captain William Kidd, used to travel the waters of Long Island and New Jersey. With his homestead near Water Street, in lower Manhattan Island, the Atlantic Highlands were a likely hiding place for treasure. To this day, these local beaches and adjacent waters continue to yield Spanish silver reales and British copper coins.

LONG ISLAND

Next stop on the Northeast diving vacation might be to one of Long Island's ocean communities and sandy beaches. Here, too, it's a good idea to consider uti-





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lizing one of the many local charter boat operations to reach dive sites along Fire Island's famous seashore. Most of these visit such wrecks as the ***San Diego***, a World War I battleship lying in 110 feet of water or the Cunard Line's blue-ribbon steamship, the ***Oregon***, resting in 120 feet of water. Both of these are for the more experienced diver. Shallow water diving, however, can be found near the Shinnecock Inlet's **Ponquoque Bridge**, a "must see" for underwater photographers; and along the quiet north shore of **Montauk Point**, at the far eastern tip of the island.

In a successful effort to provide more Long Island beach dive sites, the Long Island Divers Association, Inc., an active organization of major dive clubs in the area, campaigned to open **Caumsett State Park**, at Lloyd Neck, to scuba divers holding permits. These may now be obtained from the Park and Recreation Commission's headquarters in North Babylon, NY.

Long Island's Sound differs from its south shore ocean in that it provides reef and wreck dives from either New York or Connecticut shores. Favorite shallow water boat dives from the New York side include the ***Glen Island*** and the ***Maine***, two 1800s steamboats that sank near the exclusive north shore coast.

After seeing what New York City and Long Island have to offer in the way of boat and beach diving, visitors may want to rest in the Big Apple for a day or two before deciding whether to head north, toward the Gulf of Maine, or south along the New Jersey coast.

NEW JERSEY

New Jersey's white sand beaches and ocean coastline, with an accumulation of historic shipwrecks, closely resemble that of Long Island and are a logical next stop. Excellent shore diving can be found at the **Shark River Inlet** stone jetty, where diverse marine creatures make captivating U/W photographic subjects.

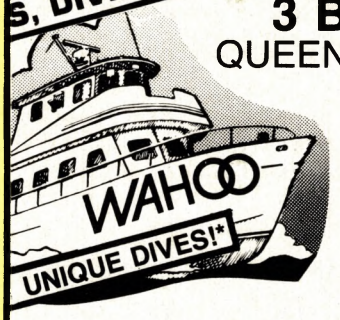
But it's New Jersey's shipwrecks that make the diving challenging. Heading down the coastline toward Cape May, wreck dives can range from the ***Stolt Dagali***, a Swedish oil tanker embedded in the sand and rising at an angle from 130 to about 70 feet, to the ***Mohawk***, a passenger liner that sank in the 1930s in 80 feet of water off Manasquan Inlet. Just a mere sampling of the more than 300 commonly visited shipwrecks in the area includes the ***Gulf Trade***, an oil tanker that sank in two sections in 50 and 85 feet of water off Barnegat; the ***City of Athens***, an elegant steamship in 110 feet; ***Astra***, a Danish freighter in 80 feet not far from Atlantic City; the ***Almirante*** or Flour Wreck, in 65 feet near Brigantine; and the **China Wreck**, in 20 feet near Avalon.

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along the coasts are the dive stores. Owners and staff are eager to assist newcomers and visitors with East Coast wreck diving and generally will put you in touch with not only the right local charter boat captain, but recommend dive locations and potential dive buddies as well. With the thousands of sport divers who visit these areas each weekend, boat captains, divemasters and store owners make safety their number one concern.

In addition, local divers are so involved in shipwrecks they even conduct seminars and workshops on how to locate and explore them. The next such workshop, run by the Atlantic Alliance for Maritime Heritage Conservation, will feature



the noted underwater archaeologist, R. Duncan Mathewson, near Atlantic City, on September 21 and 22. (Contact (609) 646-5090 for more information.)

For evening pleasure, any visitor to New Jersey would be hard pressed to pass up the opportunity to see Atlantic City, the Las Vegas of the East, with its razzle-dazzle nightlife, luxury hotels and gambling casinos. Totally different, like a New England town, is Cape May, at the southern tip of New Jersey. This quaint historical community overlooks the northern entrance to Delaware Bay and was home to some of the earliest colonial flotillas and merchant ships that sailed the East Coast.

Next stop on our Northeast diving journey is back to Long Island Sound, but this time from the Westchester, NY and Connecticut shores. **Rye Beach**, just off the New England Thruway, provides easy, enjoyable shore diving for all.

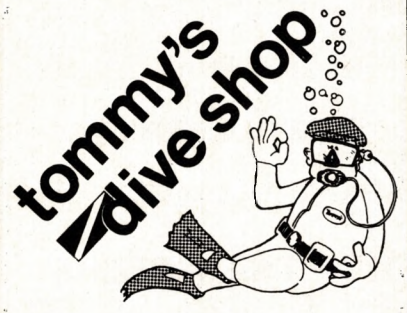
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Island; and at **Greenwich Point Park**, and **Stamford Harbor Breakwall**. All of these have plenty of lobsters, sponges and other marine life to whet your interest. For a place to stay, consider one of the many quiet inns that dot the state. While Connecticut does offer shore diving, most activity is generally conducted either from local charter boats or from your own rental boat. The best place to learn who, where and how, is through the area's dive stores.

As we continue northward, interesting dives include **Sheffield Island Reef**,



near Norwalk; **Cockenoe Island Reef**, near Westport; **Penfield Reef**, near Fairfield; and the numerous breakwalls that protect the harborways. At Waterford, just outside the famous New London submarine base, interesting sites are **Pleasure Beach** and **Harkness Memorial Park**, both shore dives, that are a haven for lobster, crabs, blackfish and flounder.

RHODE ISLAND

As you head toward Rhode Island, keep in mind that some of the most dramatic wreck diving from boats exists in the waters surounding **Fisher's Island**, **Watch Hill** and **Block Island**, not far from the coast.

Just off Fisher's, which is closer to northern Connecticut, lies the wreck of the **S.S. *Olinda***, an 1800s steam cargo ship that ran aground one of the island's tricky reefs and sank in 30 feet of water. Near Watch Hill lie the wrecks of the ***Onondaga***, a 2,700 ton freighter that sank in June 1918, in 50 feet of water; and the famous Long Island Sound paddlewheel steamer, the ***Larchmont***, in 130 feet of water. This latter sent 200 passengers to their graves after colliding with a schooner. When diving these wrecks, extra caution should be taken to consider the swift

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NORTHEAST

currents. Slack tide is the safest time.

Not far from the Valley of the Wrecks, but closer to Point Judith, RI and Montauk, Long Island sits Block Island. Besides historic ships, these waters offer some of the most dramatic marine life with large sharks, tuna, schooling mackerel and swordfish. Block Island, named after the historic navigator, Adrian Block, who sailed these waters in the early 1600s, offers beautiful ocean vistas in a rural New England seaside setting.

You can reach the island by public ferry or commuter airplane. Better still, stop by any one of the Rhode Island dive shops to arrange a charter, usually out of Point Judith, for Block Island wreck diving. One of the most famous undersea sites in the area is the sunken German submarine, ***U-853***, said to be the last U-boat sunk during the war. She rests in 130 feet of water, a quiet lure for experienced divers. A victim of the sub, the **S.S. *Black Point***, sits in 80-90 feet, not faraway, in Block Island Sound. Other wrecks include: the ***Essex***, a steamer lying at 25 feet; the ***Lightburn***, a tanker spread out in 20 feet; and the ***Montana***, a 165 foot long schooner that sank in January 1907, in 80 feet of water.

A vacation in Rhode Island can't be complete without a visit to **Point Judith's** fishing village and jetties, Jamestown's historic **Fort Wetherill** and **Newport's** famous harbor and beaches.

While shipwrecks abound in these waters, the real draw is the incredible abundance of marine life within easy reach of the shore. Large eels, lobsters, schooling fish and huge bass and blackfish are common in such dive sites as **King's Beach**, **Castle Hill**, **Gooseberry Island** and **Brenton Point** at Newport; and the **East** and **West** coves of Fort Wetherill and **Beavertail Point** at Jamestown.

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bottle collecting opportunities, with divers continuing to bring up old flasks, medicine bottles and torpedo bottles. For those with inflatable boats, trips to nearby **Seal Rock** (off King's Beach) and the **Dumplings** (near Ft. Wetherill) offer outstanding visibility and colorful marine life in 15-30 feet of water.

MASSACHUSETTS

After dives in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut and Rhode Island, Massachusetts offers an entirely new perspective, since it's the only state in the country where one can dive both gulfs within a few minutes of each other.

Cape Cod, with its national seashore park, offers an exciting glimpse of history. Some of the charter boats leave from Chatham Harbor, near the eastern mouth of the cape, for wrecks such as the ***Horatio Hall***, a large steamer that went down in 1909, in 35 feet of water; the ***Alva***, Cornelius Vanderbilt's well known yacht, now sitting in 30 feet of water; and the ***Port Hunter***, a turn of the century British freighter in 40 feet.

For wall diving nearly equal to anything found in the Caribbean, **Race Point**, near Provincetown, at the tip of the cape, provides a 60 degree slope that starts at 30 feet and descends to more than 200. This is a current or drift dive, where you're liable to find sharks, bluefish, huge lobsters and schooling baitfish on any given dive. As you come out of the drift, the waiting charter boat is always a welcome sight.

On the way from Cape Cod to Boston, a stop at Plymouth Rock, "Hometown of



America," is always fun topside and underwater. For boat dives, the wreck of the ***Pinthis***, an oil tanker that sank in the 1930s near Scituate in 95 feet of water, often yields brass portholes and other artifacts. The ship is also inhabited by large cod, providing a spearfishing challenge. Other dives nearby include **Flag Rock**, **Manomet Point** and **Gurnet Point**.

Boston divers rave about the area's outer islands, just north of Plymouth, near Boston Light. Averaging 35-40 feet deep, these small outcroppings of land provide sanctuaries for fish, lobsters and other marine life. The ***City of Salisbury*** wreck, in 85 feet of water near Graves Light, often has visibility exceeding 45 feet.

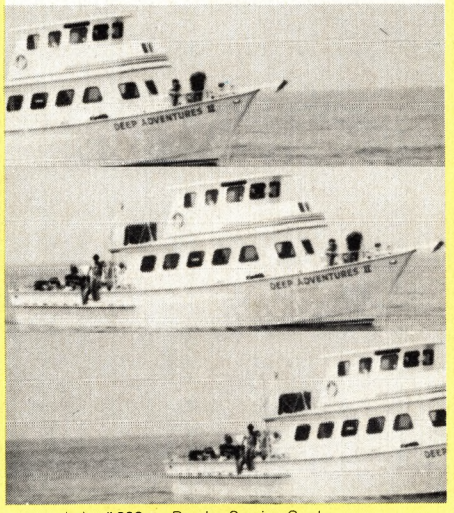
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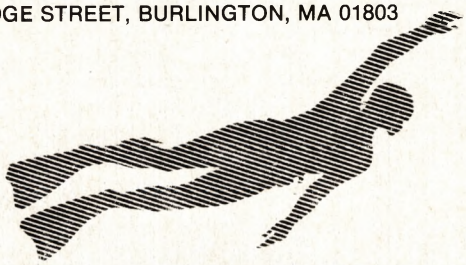
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NORTHEAST

Boston—Salem, Marblehead and Cape Ann—that often see the largest population of sport divers on any given weekday. Cape Ann, with its picturesque fishing villages of Gloucester and Rockport, is one of the major highlights of any East Coast diving vacation.

From boat diving off **Misery Islands** and **Halfway Rock**, near Beverly, to the many tiny islands that stretch north, past Gloucester, to the **Dry Salvages** and **Pigeon Cove**, Cape Ann diving, with its large colorful sea anemones and lush marine life is an underwater and topside photographer's dream.

From the beach diver's point of view, very few spots in the country can equal Cape Ann. Areas such as **Cathedral Rock**, behind the Ralph Waldo Emerson Inn off Route 127, that offer a sloping rock floor down to 70 feet, with plenty of lobsters; and **Folly Cove**, a tranquil lagoon (10-60 feet) filled to the brim with assorted marine creatures, are a diver's delight. Without a doubt, Massachusetts, like the Valley of the Wrecks, offers more spectacular dive sites than can be explored in a lifetime.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The rocky coast of New Hampshire, the smallest of all the areas visited, offers outstanding boat diving near the **Isles of Shoals** and **Big Boar's Head**. The Isles of Shoals are particularly interesting because it is believed a number of pirates hid their booty on or near these. Fueling these legends is the number of golden doubloons found in the area.

One local wreck, which also is visited by Maine's charter boats, is the ***Empire Knight***, an old British steamship in 60 feet of water. It continues to yield silverware, cups and saucers.

MAINE

Contrary to popular belief, Maine, even with its jagged coastline, does offer some incredible beach diving. Areas such as **Nubble Light**, **Old Orchard Beach** and **Biddeford Pool** near Portland are excellent.

Offshore wrecks are also plentiful. And, local dive shops will help you dive artifact yielding sites such as the ***Sagamore***, off Prout's Neck in 40 feet of water and the ***L. Alexander***, a collier in 20 feet near the rocky shore of Cape Elizabeth.

While this article cannot even begin to scratch the surface in describing the infinite number of beach and boat dives the Northeast offers, it is intended to help introduce visitors and new divers to the many hours of enjoyment and education that can be experienced through East Coast diving.

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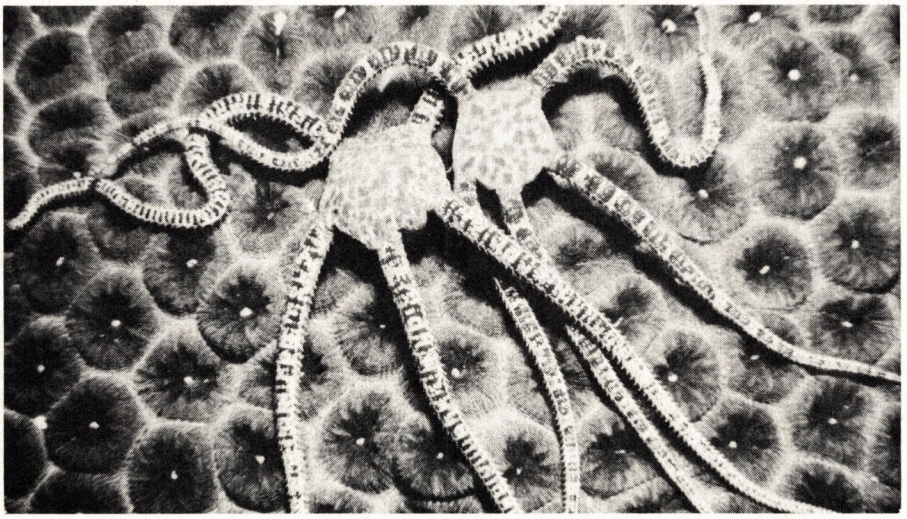
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BRITTLE STARS



TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY DONNA MCLAUGHLIN

Brittlestars are commonly found by divers all over the world. They belong to the largest major group of echinoderms with 2,000 described species. They occur in depths ranging from 5 to 1,000 feet. These creatures consist of a central flattened disk that has a star shaped pattern or color off of which are five long arms the brittlestar uses for locomotion. With two arms to pull and three to push, these starfish can easily move across the bottom or into a crevice. For meals they depend on plankton, small animals and scraps scavenged from other creatures. This matter passes through five toothlike plates on the underside of the disk. When handled, a brittlestar will autotomize (break off part or all of an arm) in an attempt to escape. Fortunately, it also has the ability to regenerate and after a period of time will again be a normal, five armed brittlestar.

Once you've figured out where these starfish live you will be able to spot them on every ocean dive. Both adults and juveniles can be found under rocks, around sponges and tucked into coral crevices. Night is the best time for locating these creatures because that's when they cling to the outside of sponges and gorgonians to sift plankton from the water. Like most night feeders, the brittlestar returns to its home when exposed to a diver's light.

For underwater photographers in search of macro critters brittlestars are a natural choice. They are easy to find in all sizes. Underwater we don't see their true beauty, but you'll be pleasantly surprised by the colorful patterns of these creatures when you see your slides.

It is a lot of fun to watch and photograph brittlestars, however, it is important to protect them while doing so. Remember that the slightest pressure on their legs will result in the loss of part or all of the appendage. Beware of the Spanish hogfish and other likely predators when moving them. Last but not least—when you remove a brittlestar from its home be sure to return it to safety when you are through.





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Technifacts

BY E.R. CROSS



Naturalist Rachel Carson called the coastlines of the world "the primeval meeting place of the elements of earth and water." This meeting of the sea with the land can be anything from gentle waves lapping softly on a sandy beach to roaring breakers crashing ashore along precipitous coasts or perhaps the most destructive of all, the devastating force of hurricane driven breakers on a coral reef.

Gale force winds and huge breakers are not usually considered suitable conditions for diving. But a commercial diver doesn't always get to choose when and where he works. And, so it was recently for Pat Wolter, his divers from American Divers and boat crews of his Pacific Workboats of Honolulu. They became involved in the salvage of three barges that were almost destroyed by the destructive forces of violently conflicting elements.

One Friday Pat and his dive and boat crews were working on a marine construction project off the west coast of the island of Oahu in Hawaii. There were no indications of bad weather or rough seas. Saturday afternoon, Pat learned, as he listened to the NOAA weather report, that weather conditions were about to change for the worse. A frontal system was moving rapidly down from the north and winds from the west were predicted to reach gale force in the work area. This could mean serious trouble for the barges they had been working from. Pat put his divers and tug crews on standby so they would be immediately available for any emergency that might develop.

Sometime during Sunday night, with no protection from the westerly gale and relentless breaking waves, the three work barges, dragging their multiple anchors and mooring systems behind them, were driven through crashing surf onto the coral reef.

Even before the barges grounded some damage occurred. Equipment was washed overboard and smashed.

Tug crews stood by in case it was deemed possible to tow the barges back out to sea. The wheelhouse windows of one tug were smashed by towering waves. Electronic systems were shorted

(Continued on Page 64)

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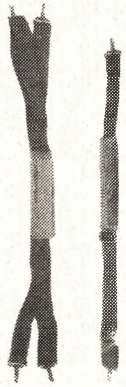
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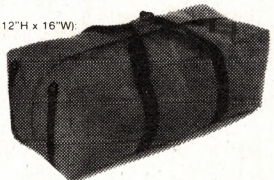
SIZE:
(23½"H x 7½"Dia.) Fits snugly over air supply tank with or without boot.

LGB635:
LARGE SIX-POCKET GEAR BAG



SIZE: (27"L x 12"H x 14"W)
END POCKETS: FOUR (5"L x 10"H x 3"W)
INSIDE POCKETS: TWO (12"L x 27"H) both full length, inside zippered, wet/dry pockets.
Also a (27"L x 19"H) inside separator flap.
Strap comes with bag.

XGB255:
EXTRA LARGE TWO-POCKET GEAR BAG
SIZE:
(33"L x 12"H x 16"W).



INSIDE POCKETS: TWO (33"L x 12"H) both full length, inside zippered, wet/dry pockets.
Also a (33"L x 19"H) inside separator flap.

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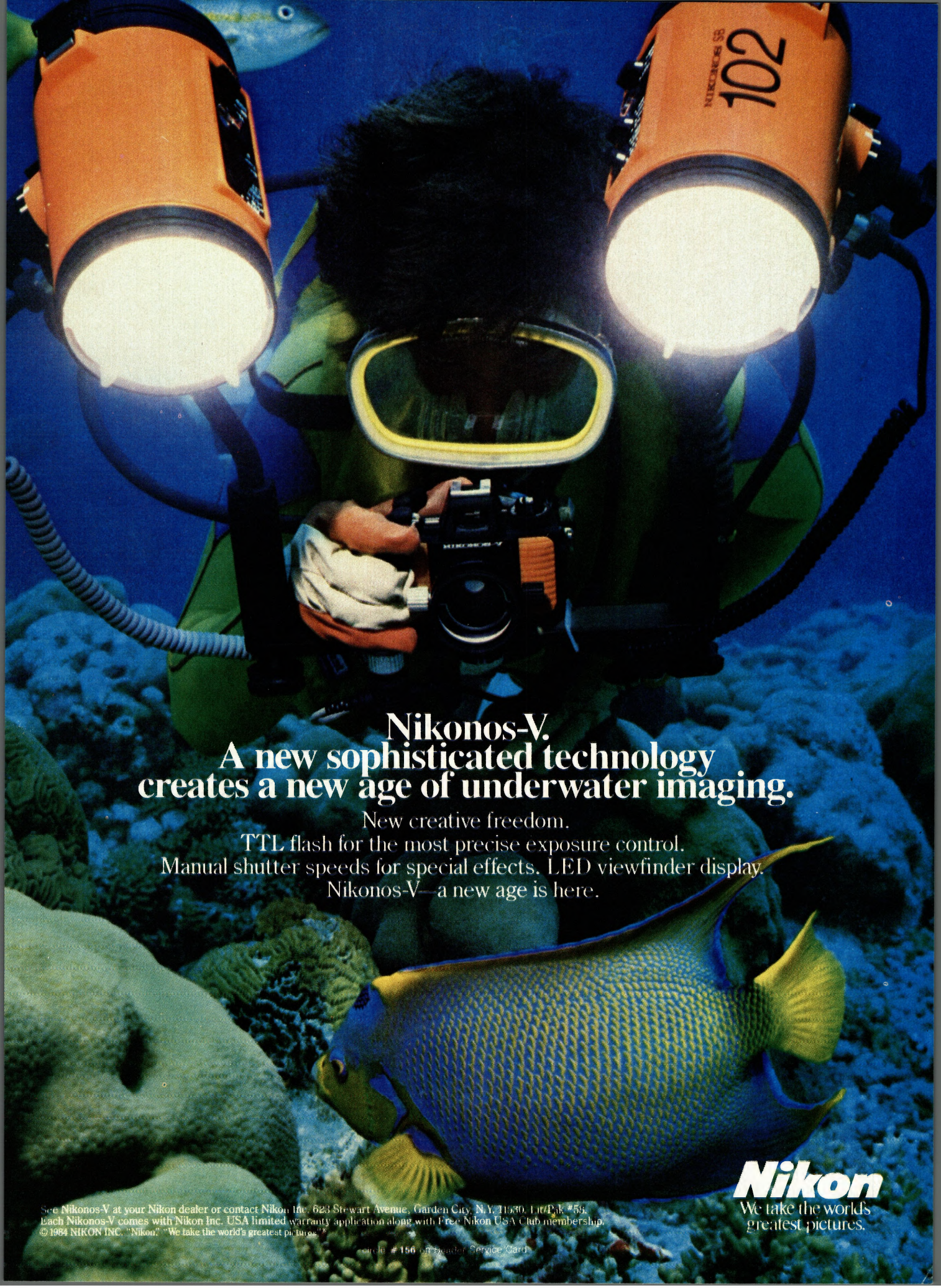
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Hands On Test:

NIKONOS V

When SKIN DIVER asked us to review the Nikonos V, we were thrilled. Immediately our minds were filled with visions of beautiful, warm, tropical waters, where angelfish abound. But, what's that you're saying? Test the Nikonos V in *cold* water? That doesn't sound nearly as inviting. Well, pack away the bikinis and bring out the drysuits.

The logic behind cold water testing of the amphibious Nikonos V was that if it was able to perform in 40°F water with surge, sand and mud, then diving with it at sunny resorts should be a photographer's dream.

The Nikonos V is more than an improved version of the previous models, it is a whole new way of thinking. Although it is amphibious, most divers used its predecessors only underwater. But the V, with Through-The-Lens (TTL) metering, works as well on land as underwater.

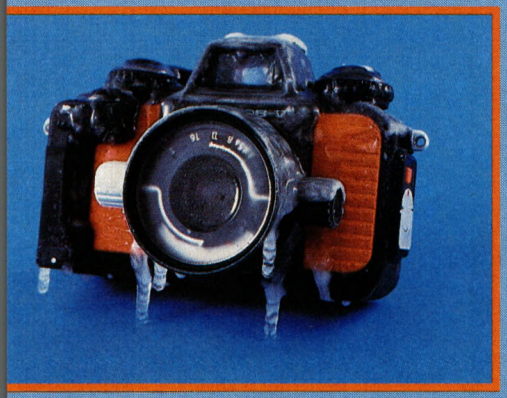
One look at the Nikonos V and you'll find beauty and ruggedness in one, small package. The bright orange panels give the camera a new, sleek look and are functional as well. The diver can see the shutter release and focus control knobs better because they stand out against the orange background. In low light it was sometimes difficult to locate these knobs on the all black models.

The anatomical grip and shutter

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACK AND SUE DRAFAHL



The Camera That Endures All Conditions



The camera worked while encased in ice.



The photographs above were taken with the Nikonos V in cold, surgy ocean water.

release conform to a diver's hand, even when wearing three fingered mitts. Looking at the top of the camera, the film-speed dial is highly visible on the left-hand side. The ISO range is from 25-1600, allowing photographers versatility in the dim light often encountered in colder waters. To change the ISO setting, simply lift the knurled knob slightly, turn and release. This is easy, even when wearing gloves.

On the top right-hand side of the camera, you will find the shutter speed dial. This has R, B, M90 and A on it. The manual, quartz controlled shutter speeds range from 1/1000 to 1/30 second.

When the control is set in the R position, film can be rewound by lifting the rewind control on the left and turning it clockwise. If the photographer forgets to change this control back to a normal shutter speed, the camera will not function, indicating something is wrong.

The B setting is for long exposures. It can also be used to confirm the film has been completely rewound. When you remove the lens and depress B you can see the film plane. If it is black, the film is rewound; if you see film, close the shutter and continue rewinding—you will have lost only one frame, instead of possibly the whole roll.

M90 is a mechanical shutter speed designed to save the day when batteries fail. It is also the sync speed for non-TTL strobes made by other manufacturers.



Neither ocean waves and sand nor construction site mud could stop the Nikonos V.

The A setting is for auto exposure with available light and TTL flash. This function is controlled by two SPD (Silicon Photo Diode) sensors inside the camera. The center weighted upper sensor is for available light and reads off the gray card in the back of the camera. The lower sensor is for the TTL flash and reads directly off the film. When loading, the camera ignores the auto mode and fires at 1/1500 second until it reaches the first frame. This prevents any damaged to the camera when the photographer quickly advances the film to the first frame.

The mechanical shutter speeds from 1/1000 to 1/30 second allow the more avanced photographer that creative edge. The camera does flash sync with TTL flashes at 1/30 and 1/60 seconds. In cold water this allows more available light to enter the lens when taking flash pictures, giving a better ratio between

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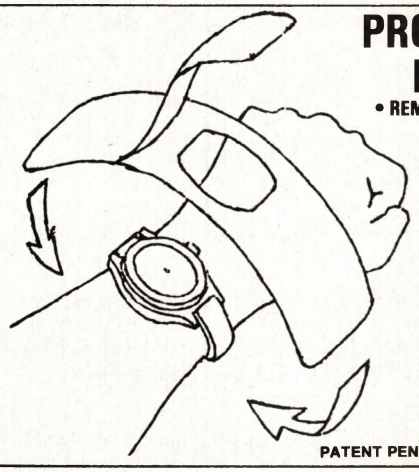
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NIKONOS V

flash and background.

To the right of the shutter speed dial is the exposure counter. This dial is easy to read, even in low light. The #1 exposure is marked in red.

The base of the camera has a standard tripod socket, a battery compartment and flash connector port. This latter has been through some major changes. First, the bottom of the port is recessed slightly to prevent any excess corrosion between various camera brackets and the base of the camera. Second, there are five pins in the port instead of three. These are necessary for the new TTL flash systems. For photographers with older flashes, two of the five pins are spring loaded and move out of the way when III or IV connectors are used.

It is very important to closely check your flash connector to ensure it will fit in this new sync port. Some of the older flash connectors made by other manufactures will not fit into the Nikonos V without an adapter.

The viewfinder of the Nikonos V is enlarged so the entire field of view can be seen while wearing a facemask. The bright LED at the base of the viewfinder tells the photographer if there is power, which shutter speed is correct for available light and when the flash is ready.

Loading the Nikonos V is as simple as loading any land camera. Simply press the safety button on the side of the camera, turn the release and the back of the camera pops open. The improved backplate has been reinforced and uses a standard O-ring. The pressure plate is hinged to the film plane; it may take new underwater photographers a while to get use to this. Above the film plane is a small plate held in place by four small screws. If the impossible happens and water enters the camera, these four screws can be removed and fresh water can be introduced to dilute and remove saltwater.

The 35 mm lens that comes with the camera can be used on land and underwater. The angle of view on land is 62 degrees; this is reduced to 43 degrees underwater. This is the most versatile of all the lenses as it is used for normal, close-up and macro photography. Other lenses available for the Nikonos V include the 28 and 15 mm underwater wide angle lenses, an 80 mm land and underwater lens and a new 28 mm land lens.

One very important Nikonos V accessory is the instruction manual. It is well written, easy to understand and each camera part is described and illustrated. The manual also includes a short course on underwater photography that can be very helpful.

COLD WATER PERFORMANCE

Testing this masterpiece of technology

in several cold water locations was a real joy. Underwater tests were performed in Puget Sound and off the coast of California. Scuba diving in colder water such as in Puget Sound requires extra diving equipment. Most divers wear drysuits, which tend to restrict movement a bit, require added weight and definitely make diving a bit more complicated. Adding a bulky camera system would only complicate matters. That's where the Nikonos V comes in handy. It is light, compact and all the controls can be easily operated when wearing gloves. Should the camera be dropped in mud or sand, its orange panels would make it easy to spot. The camera's electronics allow accurate exposure control even in 40°F water.

The second test site was in the waters around the Santa Barbara Channel Islands. The water temperature was a bit warmer but here we encountered quite a bit of surge. Underwater camera housings take a real beating with the constant movement of water. But the compact Nikonos V causes no drag. Even if the photographer does get caught in a swell, this camera is tough enough to take the sand, rocks and kelp with ease. It is also small enough to get into some of those nooks and crannies where critters hide.

Available light photography in the kelp beds was a delight when working with the new 15 mm lens. It is fast, compact and has tremendous depth of field. Combine



that with the metering system of the Nikonos V and you've got it made.

Previous models of the Nikonos were considered by most photographers to be an underwater camera that could be used on land, but only in a pinch. Not so with the Nikonos V! This camera works as well out of the water as it does in. The new, improved TTL metering system and the addition of the land lens allow versatility and reliability. Now underwater photographers can leave their land camera systems safely at home when they head for distant diving locations and be assured they will bring home memories in living color!

When SKIN DIVER asked us to put the Nikonos V through its paces, we needed to think of an endurance test to beat all endurance tests. We did.

First, a bucket of mud was collected from a local construction site and the Nikonos V was dropped into it and stirred around until it was completely enveloped. Then the camera was cleaned off, tested and found to be totally operational.

Second, a very finely grained sand was poured over the camera until it was completely covered. The camera was then brushed off, tested and again found to be operating as usual.

Worried that the previous tests were not rugged enough, we took the Nikonos V to the beach and buried it at the surfline. As the waves pounded on and receded from the shore, we wondered if this was really such a great idea: Just what would we tell Nikon if the camera wasn't there? After 30 minutes of this torture the camera was removed, tested and again, it worked perfectly.

Determined to find a test that might show some wear on the camera, we placed it in a freezer for eight hours. Every 15 minutes water was sprayed on the camera, so that by the end of the day it was encased in ice. Once we pried it from the freezer bottom, we chipped ice away from the shutter control and pushed our luck. The camera still worked on all settings, including auto.

We had one final test in mind that involved an elephant. Timex, however had already tried that idea, so we gave up, conceding that the Nikonos V is one tough camera: It takes a licking and keeps on clicking!

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PRINCETON TECTONICS' DG-5 DEPTH GAUGE

Lifetime Guarantee For The Budget Conscious Diver



BY JIM WALKER

For a newly certified diver, unsure how far he/she is going to pursue the sport, the prospect of acquiring a full set of dive gear can be awesome. And, the availability of a dependable depth gauge at a reasonable price could be the difference between staying active in the sport or dropping out.

Princeton Tectonics' DG-5 is a Swiss made capsule depth gauge for the budget-conscious diver. Enclosed in an impact resistant, welded plastic housing, the gauge's beryllium-copper bourdon tube mechanism is accurate. The gauge is oil filled for protection against pressure damage and corrosion. The large face is luminous yellow, contrasting with the black pointer needle, numbers and bars for easy reading in dim light. The depth indicator bars are evenly spaced around the dial from 0 to 160 or 260 feet (depending on model) for accurate monitoring. Ten foot increments are large bars (10, 20, 30, etc.) while the five foot increment bars are smaller (15, 25, 35, etc.). Thus, the diver can read depth at a glance, even when the needle isn't right next to one of the digital numbers. The bars at 10, 20, 30 and 40 feet are red, accenting where decompression stops might be made if the dive calls for them.

The DG-5 comes with a unique rubber stopper in the back of the case. If air bubbles ever form in the gauge your Princeton Tectonics dealer can add oil through this stopper to eliminate them.

The DG-5 comes in a shock-resistant molded rubber boot with attached wrist strap. This latter has a stainless steel buckle and built in ridges near the gauge that flex out when the strap is tight and pull inward as the wetsuit sleeve compresses at depth. This flex in the strap and the curved back of the boot combine to make the gauge fit comfortably.

After your day of diving, rinse the DG-5 thoroughly in fresh water. As with any dive instrument, keep it protected from heavy objects in your gear bag and don't leave it lying around in the hot sun.

The gauge comes with Princeton Tectonics' lifetime, one owner guarantee and retails for $60. With a maximum depth needle it is $70. The DG-5 is also available in consoles. See your Princeton Tectonics dealer or contact the company at P.O. Box 8057, Trenton, NJ 08650.

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MINI C-LITE K

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INFLATABLES

Are They The Boat For You?



TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL DE LA CHAPELLE

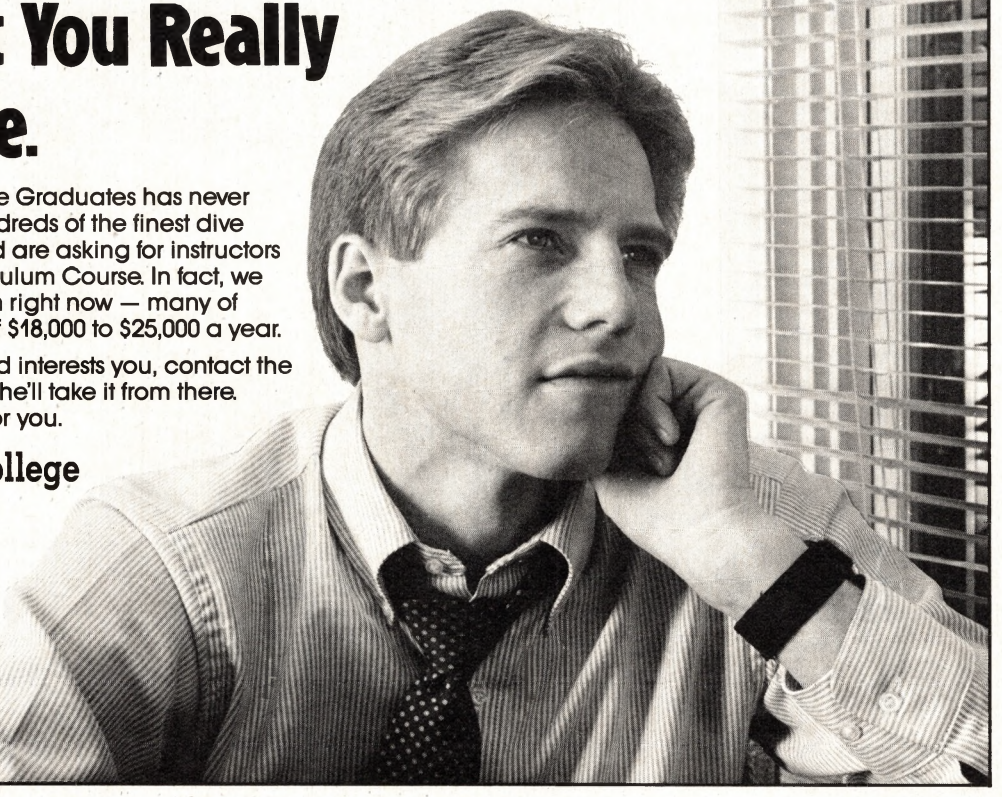
Are you looking for an alternative to diving from crowded charter boats or beach dives on murky, picked-over reefs? Why not consider an inflatable boat as a way to explore those distant offshore reefs that are teaming with life? Inflatables make excellent diving platforms and they are a lot of fun to use, but they do have a few drawbacks. This article will help you decide if they are right for you and will also give you tips on choosing the right inflatable.

The use of inflatable boats has been quite extensive in Europe and their popularity is on the rise in the United States. Many quality inflatables are manufactured overseas, with European and Oriental brands accounting for the bulk of the market. Inflatable boats can be divided into three basic types: dinghies and river rafts have an oval shaped hull that extends completely around the boat and sportboats are identified by a U-shaped hull and wooden transom across the stern. Dinghies usually have a small motor mount on the stern for attaching a low power outboard. They are used more for yacht tenders than for diving because of their limited maximum horsepower. Sport boats, with a transom, floorboards and inflatable keel meet the requirements of most divers. Let's take a look at the advantages of this type of boat.

First, they are extremely portable because of their light weight and ability to fold into a small package when deflated. This portability allows the diver to transport his boat to remote locations in the trunk of a car without the need for a trailer. When they are not being used, they can be folded and stored in a closet. Then, when you're ready for a dive, most inflatables smaller than 11 feet can be carried, assembled and launched by a single person in less than half an hour. Larger boats are often carried on trailers.

Another desirable characteristic of inflatable boats is their amazing stability. Their low centers of gravity and wide beams make them difficult to capsize, even in the roughest seas. This is why they are used so often for lifeboats and rescue boats. Increased stability allows the use of a more powerful outboard motor than can be safely used to propel conventional vessels of the same length. Inflatables typically have three or more separate chambers so that a puncture or leak in any one of them will not result in

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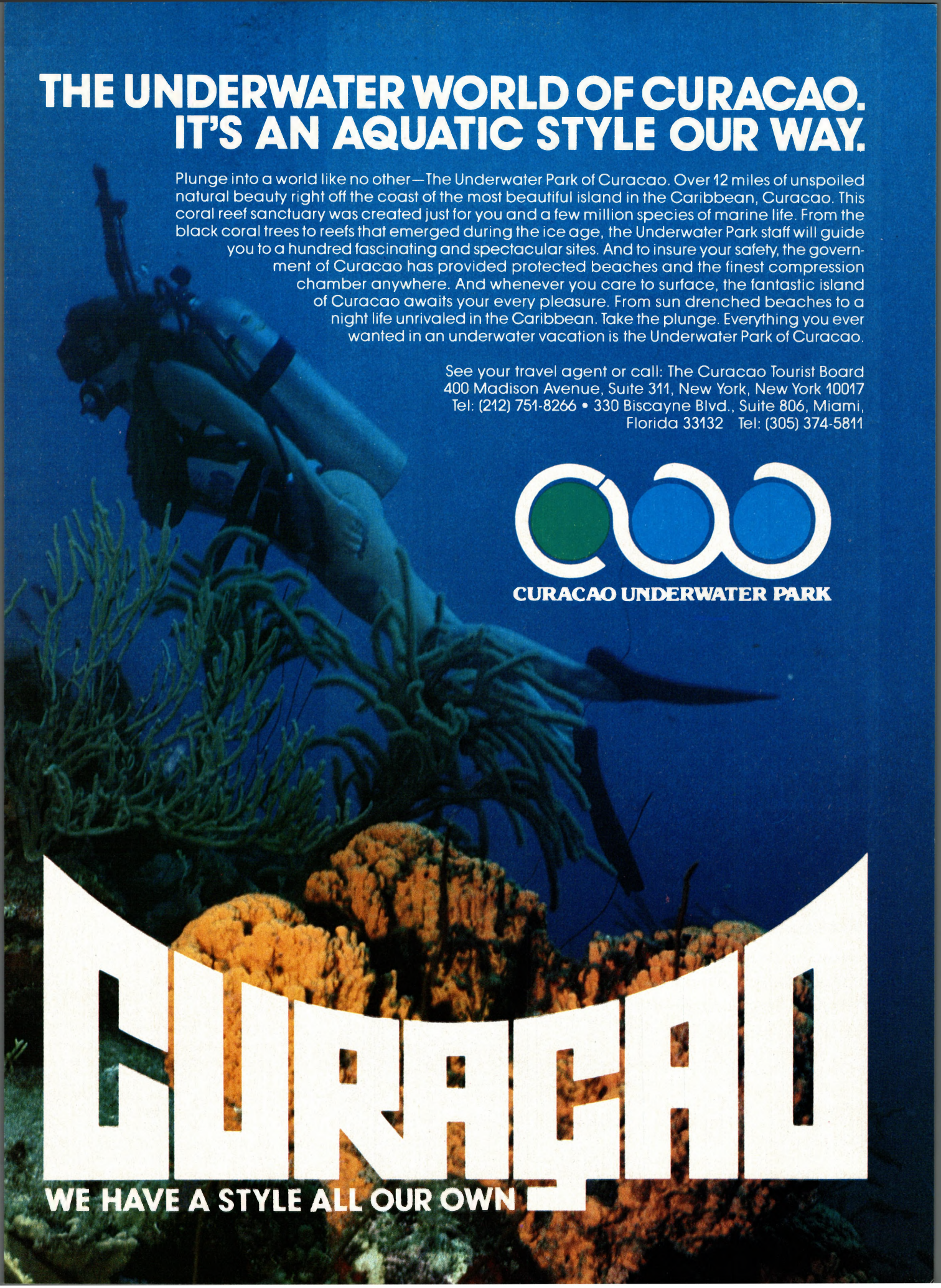
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the sinking of the craft. They are generally safer and more seaworthy than conventional boats of the same length made of aluminum, fiberglass or wood.

A third reason inflatable boats have such an appeal to scuba divers is the tremendous payload they can carry. I have seen seven divers with full sets of equipment, including tanks, loaded into an 11 foot inflatable. The deck was piled with gear to the top of the hull, which the divers sat on with their legs dangling outward into the water. You would be lucky to get two divers with gear into an aluminum boat of equal length. The immense weight-carrying capabilities of inflatable boats can be attributed to the buoyancy of their large air chambers. Even when completely swamped, the average 12 foot inflatable will support over 1,500 pounds of weight. The boat I own has a greater maximum recommended payload than the car I transport it in.

Divers can really appreciate the ease of water entries and exits made possible by the wide hull and shallow freeboard of inflatables. A diver can sit on the hull with his legs overboard and gently slip into the ocean or he may execute a more flamboyant back roll. No ladder is required as with conventional boats. Also, there is a lack of rocking and certainly no possibility of capsizing, when a fully geared diver jumps overboard. This type of accident is a real danger in small, rigid hull vessels.

There are no other boats that fulfill the mission of transporting divers short distances as well as inflatables. They can also be used for other recreational activities such as fishing and water skiing. Having an inflatable allows you to avoid crowded boat ramps and hoists which sometimes require the payment of a fee; you can simply launch through the surf at a local beach. For these reasons, inflatable boats are reputed to be the ideal diving platforms.

Now, what are some of the drawbacks and disadvantages of inflatables? The price of such boats is much higher than that of conventional rigid hull craft of the same length and they have a reputation for not being as durable. Progress in the development of improved materials that resist wear and tear, as well as deterioration from ultraviolet light, gasoline and salt; and better techniques for joining seams, have made these boats more rugged than ever. Many manufacturers now offer multi-year warranties that have increased consumer confidence in their products. Despite these efforts to improve durability, inflatables have a shorter usable lifetime and reduced resale value when compared to other types of boats.

Some inflatable boat users complain

about poor handling and comfort. Slipping during high speed turns is a problem with all boats with flat, planing hulls. This condition is exacerbated in inflatables by their shallow draft and light weight. To alleviate this problem, inflatable, V-shaped keels are built into most boats. Some of the more expensive models have rigid keels and hulls made of fiberglass or wood that combine the best features of conventional and purely inflatable designs. These hybrid models have less slippage in fast turns and offer a smoother ride.

Comfort is another shortcoming of the flexible hull design. A greater amount of wave energy is transmitted through the hull to the passengers than on rigid hull boats. This makes the ride bumpier and results in more wear on the structure. The continual pounding through choppy waves can be fatiguing, especially on long trips. Also, a lot of spray is generated, so expect to get wet.

Other complaints about inflatables involve the convenience of operation. Assembling and disassembling an inflatable can be laborious and time consuming. Launching through the surf is tricky and sometimes dangerous. And, finally, washing the sand and salt off of the boat and outboard motor (in addition to all your diving gear) is not very pleasant, especially after a tiring day of diving.

Now that many of the benefits and drawbacks of inflatable boats have been discussed, here is a brief description of the features to look for when shopping for an inflatable for diving:

Aluminum floors are a must. Wooden ones cannot take the punishment of tanks and weightbelts being dropped on them.

Do not buy an inflatable with a fixed bowdodger (for deflecting bow spray) or windshield. These take up valuable deck space you require for gear.

If you intend to launch at the beach, choose a boat light enough to hand carry, but large enough for gear and a buddy.

Outboard motors should be light weight for ease of carrying, yet powerful enough to plane the boat when loaded. Short-shaft outboards are recommended for most inflatables.

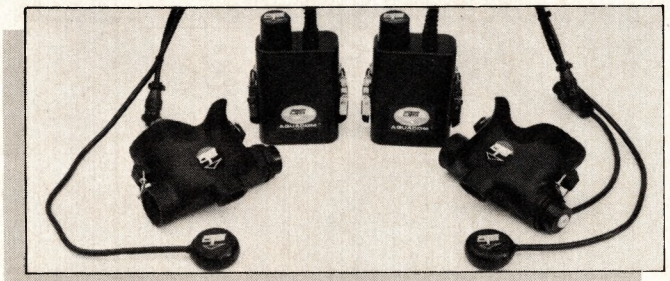
It is very important to shop around for an inflatable that offers a good warranty—one that covers at least the material and seams for more than a couple of years.

The hardships of inflatable boat ownership are long forgotten as you collapse into bed after a long hard day of diving. In those few seconds of semiconsciousness before you drift off into an eight hour coma you recall: the exhilaration of skimming along the surface of a clear, blue ocean on a sparkling summer morning; the excitement of diving a new reef that's inaccessible to fellow landlocked divers; and the thrill of witnessing the passing of a pod of whales only 100 feet off your bow. These experiences are certainly the most rewarding, yet intangible, benefits of inflatable boat ownership.



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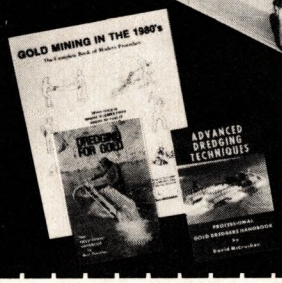
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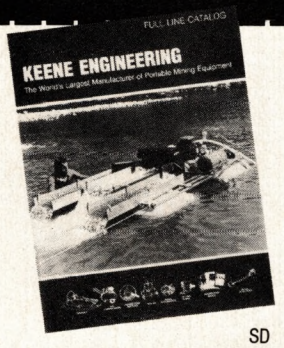
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NORMANDIE SALUTED

The 50th anniversary of the maiden voyage of the French ocean liner *Normandie* will be saluted by the Oceanic Navigation Research Society (ONRS) in New York City and Los Angeles. The *Normandie*, the floating art deco palace of the 1930s, arrived in New York on her first voyage June 3, 1935. The first 1,000 foot liner took the speed record on her first crossing to New York and back to her home port, Le Havre.

The Los Angeles anniversary will be held June 15 at the Biltmore Hotel in the Music Room and will host the vice president of ONRS, Harvey Ardman, who recently finished the book *Normandie: Her Life and Times*. He will talk about the amazing career of the Normandie from her keel laying and glamorous career carrying the social elite of the world, to her tragic fire on February 9, 1942 while being converted to a troopship. She was later raised and scrapped.



The *Normandie* salute will feature the dinner listed on her first class menu and live music from the late 1930s will capture the mood. Rare films of the ship will be shown.

For reservation information for the early June New York and June 15 dinner in Los Angeles ($60 per person) write ONRS, Inc., Box 8005, Universal City, CA 91608-0005 or call (818) 985-1345.

CMSC

The Catalina Marine Science Center at Two Harbors, Catalina Island, CA is offering an underwater natural history of Catalina course June 7-9 and July 19-21. Specialty courses for small groups can also be arranged in subjects such as U/W photography, archaeology or tethered-air diving.

For more information contact Mike White, CMSC Diving Officer, P.O. Box 398, Avalon, CA 90704; (213) 743-6793 or 743-7882.

MIAMI NEW ENGLAND DIVERS

New England Divers, Inc. has relocated its primary Florida store from 2nd Avenue, Miami, to 6043 NW 167th Street, in the Commercial Center of Miami.

New England Divers, founded in Bev-

erly, Massachusetts in 1951, operates from eight locations in Massachusetts, California, Washington and Florida. The company's South Dade, FL store is at 9820 South Dixie Highway in Kendall.

CHRONOSPORT AWARDS

Chronosport, Inc. presented certificates of personal appreciation to dealers Nestor Palmero of Dixie Divers, Florida;



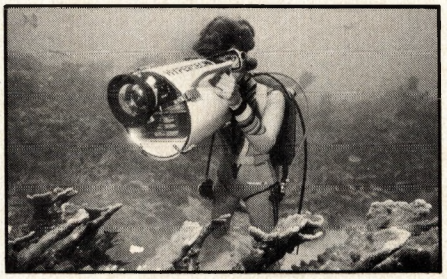
Noel Veroba of Orbit Marine, Connecticut and Scott Jones of Dive 'n Surf, California, for outstanding and dedicated merchandising of Chronosport timepieces in 1984.

BERRY SCUBA LOBSTER

During a recent diving trip off the Florida coast hosted by Berry Scuba of Atlanta, Gary Holloway, the manager of Berry Atlanta (in Hapeville, GA) captured a 15 pound lobster. The tail alone weighed over five and one-half pounds. "We wrestled for awhile, but I won!" said Gary. The lobster was one of the largest he has caught during his 12 years as a diver.

KEYS VIDEO ADVENTURE

Stephen Frink Photographic, in conjunction with Ocean Divers, is offering a new service for divers wishing to document their Pennekamp underwater adventure. Personnel from Frink Photo will accompany groups of one to six divers



on coral reef excursions and video tape them in the water, as well as much of what they see on the dive and perhaps some fish behavior or reef activity they might not have seen. This graphic memory of the beauty of the Pennekamp reefs is available on either VHS or Beta tapes. The cost for the cameraman, underwater video camera and finished tape is $195 (by appointment only). Inquire at Ocean Divers or Stephen Frink Photographic or phone (800) 451-3737. In Florida phone (305) 451-3737.

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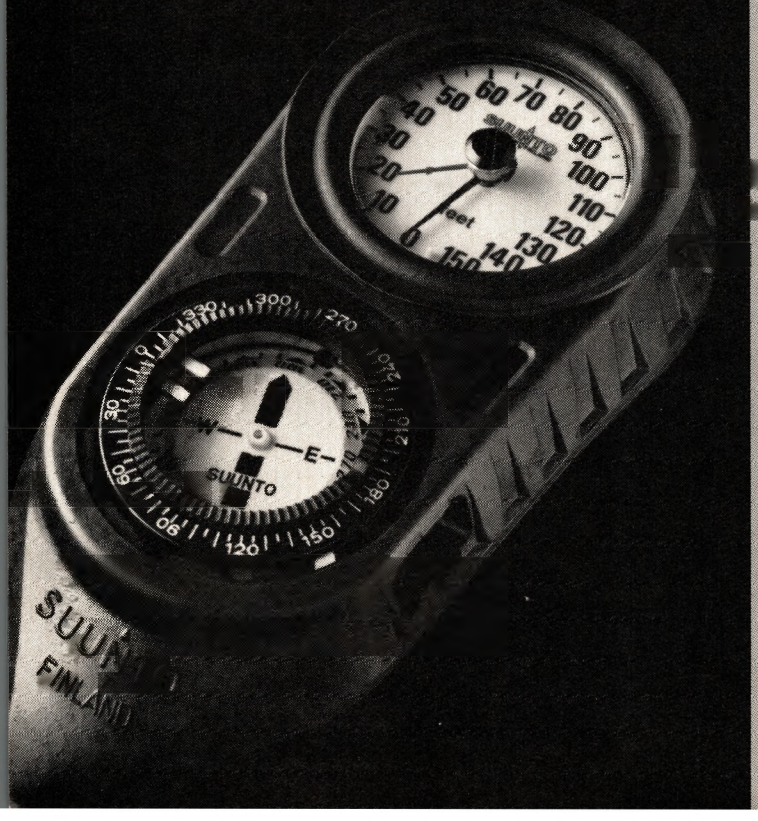




BY WILLIAM H. HUGHES

Sitting on the divers' dock of the M/V *Sea Fox*, I listened intently to the divemaster's final directions. Cautioning that a four knot surface current was running, he suggested holding the downline as I slid into the Atlantic. Nervously, I asked what would happen if my grip failed. Pointing to Cape Hatteras on the horizon, he indicated they would pick me up there. Clutching my Nikonos, I eased into the water, a lump in my throat and a butterfly in my gut. Descending rapidly to 15 feet, I struggled against the current

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photo/William H. Hughes

and waited for my cohort, Bob Fisher. A short distance away, a school of anchovies swam by. I was tempted to snap their pictures since visibility extended beyond 50 feet. Instead, I hung tightly to the down-line, trying to avoid hyperventilating while making a conscious effort to relax. I reflected, with just a little remorse, how I got into this situation in the first place.

When I was 11, my parents took our family on a vacation that started it all. During the summer of 1968, we visited the Outer Banks of North Carolina. In the town of Nags Head, we stopped for dinner at a seafood restaurant. On the table was a cheap paper place mat. Although inexpensive, it was to become my most cherished souvenir of the trip. Printed across the top was the logo, "The Grave Yard of the Atlantic." Below was a large map of the Outer Banks with the locations of hundreds of shipwrecks. One wreck in particular stirred my interest. Only about an inch on the map from Nags Head were the words, "U-85, German Submarine." Over the years, I would know her very well.

HISTORY OF THE *U-85*

By the winter of 1941, German Admiral Karl Doenitz's U-boats had been wreaking havoc with the British merchant fleet for over two years. In response, England was building armed escort convoys and striving to perfect their sensitive sonar system known as the Anti-Submarine Detection Investigation Committee (ASDIC). With the aid of ASDIC and the growth of their naval forces, it seemed the tide was turning. New technology was sending German submarines to the bottom.

Faced with an escalating fatality list, Admiral Doenitz looked for a more productive hunting ground for his undersea raiders. On December 11, 1941 Adolf Hitler pinpointed the area by declaring war on the United States.

During the early morning hours of January 18, 1942 six 500 ton U-boats blew their balast tanks and came to the surface. Raising their antennae, they received the code word, *paukenschlog* (in English, roll the drum). And, roll the drum they did! Several hours later the sky near Diamond Shoals Light was ablaze. The Standard Oil Company tanker *Allan Jackson* had been hit with two torpedoes. In a matter of a few hours, her valuable cargo of crude oil was lost and 22 crew members perished. For weeks afterward, ships were sent to the bottom at an average of one a day, their desperately need-

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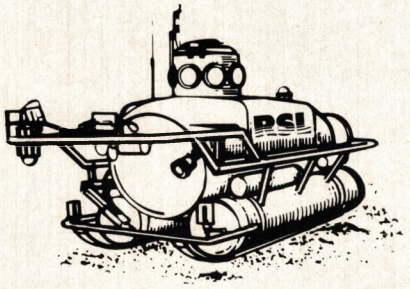
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U-85

ed war goods ending up consigned to a watery grave. The hunting was so easy that returning U-boat commanders dubbed it a turkey shoot.

America's mercantile fleets were in a state of blockade. The United States Navy had only 13 wooden ships and six planes available to defend the entire Eastern Seaboard. Nazi U-boats left their sheltered pens regularly at Lorient and St. Nazaire, well equipped and trained to go about their deadly business.

One U-boat, the *U-85*, bore the emblem of a wild boar with a rose in its mouth. Known as a type VII-b, she displaced 750 tons and was 220 feet long. Equipped with an 88 mm deck gun, a 22 mm anti-aircraft gun and five torpedo tubes, she was a deadly adversary. The submarine's crew consisted of 45 men with Captain-Lieutenant Eberhard Greger in command.

Greger's crew was well-seasoned. On an earlier patrol, on September 10, 1941, they had spotted a British convoy. In spite of air cover, they followed the convoy toward England. The next day, Greger boldly attacked on the surface in broad daylight. This move so surprised the convoy that he was able to sink a steamer and two merchant vessels. These victories were not without a price.

British destroyers were quick to start a counterattack. Utilizing ASDIC, they followed and depth charged Greger's command. The *U-85* was bounced and battered around for hours. The chief engineer, Egen Ungethum, warned of pipes breaking and gauges shattering. Finally, after 12 hours, they were able to limp to the surface. The submarine was so badly damaged that Greger ordered her home for a refit.

Following an uneventful cruise near Newfoundland, Greger received a new crew member, named Erich Degenkolb. He, like Eugen Ungethum, kept a diary. The inscription on the cover read: "Fortune favors the efficient in the long run." It is from these diaries that we are able to reconstruct life on the *U-85*.

On January 10, 1942, Greger set sail on his third war cruise. This patrol would take him to the western Atlantic approaches to New York. On the evening of January 22, Greger and his crew, using a fan of four torpedoes, sank a 10,000 ton ship. The third cruise ended when *U-85* reached its home port of St. Nazaire, February 23, 1942.

By March 21, 1942 the *U-85* was refitted and ready for sea. At 1800 hours, the boat set sail for the easy pickings off the East Coast of America. The month of March passed without much excitement, but it is interesting to note that at one point Degenkolb recorded their position as only 660 miles from Washington, D.C.

At 0100 hours on the morning of April

10 the *U-85* was to see action. A steamer was sighted and easily sunk: "fan of two—two hits." Degenkolb and his cohorts gloated with glee listening to the steamer's bulkheads collapse as it went to the bottom. With a fresh kill under his belt, Greger decided to steer south for the shipping lanes off Cape Hatteras.

The drum rolled on through February and March. A war that was once far across the Atlantic had hit home with devastating effects. Vice Admiral Adolphus Andrews was in charge of the East Coast anti-submarine campaign. On the advice of our British allies, he ordered blackouts of the coastal cities because their lights silhouetted ships and made them tempting targets. Other efforts were not so easily implemented. With a lack of ships and planes, it was impossible to even intimidate the menace. As the coastal shipping fatalities skyrocketed, Admiral Andrews was able to use public pressure to his advantage. To reassure the panicking public, the Navy placed several destroyers at his disposal.

One of the destroyers was the USS *Roper*. She was laid down in Philadelphia by William Cramp and Sons in 1918. Sponsoring the bond drive for her construction was the widow, Mrs. J. M. R. Roper. Her husband, Commander Jesse M. Roper, had died while gallantly attempting to save his crew members during a fire in 1901. It seemed only fitting the ship should be commissioned in his memory. Constructed to hunt U-boats during the First World War, the *Roper* was not completed in time to participate.

The *Roper* was an old ship when she finally saw war duty in 1942. Her first assignment was to serve as an escort to convoys bound for England. After several uneventful trips to war-torn Europe, she was assigned to patrol the East Coast shipping lanes from Virginia to North Carolina. Her crew had never seen a U-boat or made a sound contact with one.

During the daylight hours of April 13 the *U-85* lay on the bottom about 30 miles off the North Carolina coast. As darkness fell, Greger ordered the submarine on the prowl. The night was clear and the seas calm when Degenkolb made the last entry in his diary: "American beacons and search lights visible at night."

Just after midnight, the *Roper* was heading south near Bodie Island, North Carolina. The water was so calm that phosphorescent plankton could be seen leaving a green glow in her wake. Ensign Kem Tebo was at watch on the bridge. At six minutes after midnight, the *Roper's* radar unit showed a contact bearing 190 degrees true north, range 2,700 yards. Ensign Tebo ordered an eight degree change of course to investigate the small contact. As the *Roper* moved to within 2,100 yards of the mysterious contact, the sound operator reported hearing propellers turning rapidly. He qualified the report stating it was either a small Coast



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Guard vessel or maybe a submarine. Ensign Tebo summoned Lt. Cmdr. Hamilton Howe from his cabin. When apprised of the situation, he ordered an increase to 20 knots and sounded general quarters. Still not sure of the contact, he ordered a change in course to put them starboard of it. He feared that if the contact was a U-boat it might attempt a shot with its stern torpedo tube.

All was quiet aboard the *U-85*. There was no radar to warn them the *Roper* was closing in. On the bridge, Greger scanned the ocean for targets. He was probably first alerted to the closing vessel by his hydrophone operator. Confident he could sink the vessel with a stern torpedo shot, he did not dive. A crew was ordered to man the 88 mm deck gun. Greger might have cursed when he finally realized the approaching vessel was a heavily armed destroyer.

The *Roper's* crew had manned their guns, depth charge racks and torpedoes. Howe was still not sure of what lay just 700 yards ahead in the darkness. In the next instant, a torpedo passed close to the port side. There was no question of what lay ahead now. At a range of 300 yards, a 24 inch searchlight seared through the inky night. In its beam, the crew saw a camouflaged U-boat with a gunner taking a mark. The submarine turned sharply to starboard trying to evade the light. Howe gave the order to open fire.

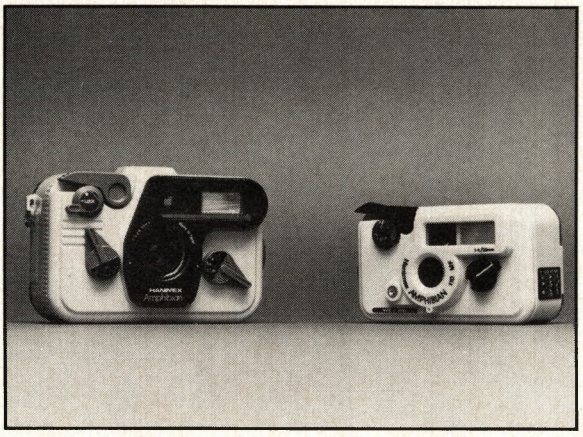
Coxswain Harry Heyman, the *Roper's* number one .50 caliber machine gunner, quickly cut the sub's gun crew down. Other gun captains were not having the same success. Two of the other .50 caliber guns refused to fire.

The *Roper's* heavy three inch guns were having similar problems. The ammunition, it would be determined later, had been in the salt spray too long. When the number five, three inch gun took aim and drew up the trigger, all that was heard was a dull click. The shell was instantly ejected into the sea and a new round loaded. This time the gun cracked to life. In the next few minutes, her crew was able to find the range and score a direct hit just aft the sub's conning tower.

The *U-85* shook as the torpedo left its stern tube. Greger watched it track as he started his stopwatch. He soon realized he had shot wide and missed. Sounding the alarm, he tried desperately to dive. Machine gun fire started pelting the deck and several of his gun crew dropped while others ran for cover behind the conning tower. Inside the submarine the crew was running forward in an effort to get their bow hydroplanes underwater. They knew this would speed their dive. The hissing sound of air being displaced from the balast tanks told them their deck

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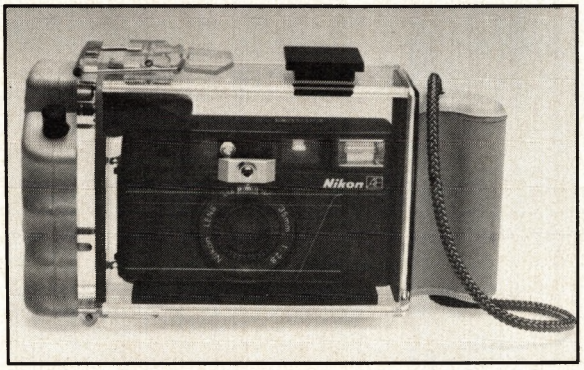
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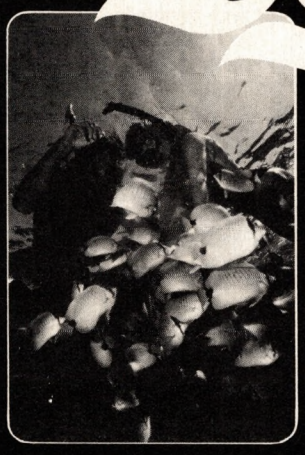
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U-85

must be almost awash. They waited and hoped, but suddenly the pressure hull was blown in with great force and water started pouring into the control room. The *Roper* had scored a direct hit. There was nothing to do now but scuttle the boat and escape. Running to their lockers, Eugene Ungethum and Erich Degenkolb grabbed their escape vests and their diaries. One by one, they climbed up the ladder into the ocean. Some of the crew would not escape until the sub was well on its way to the bottom.

Aboard the *Roper*, Howe had ordered a torpedo readied but with the sound of a square hit still ringing in the air, he decided not to fire it. Bringing the *Roper* around, he moved in for the kill. The *Roper* circled the area until dawn as Howe searched for a sister sub that might be in the area. When the sun rose the sea was covered with a black oil slick decorated by bodies in yellow escape vests.

When word reached Norfolk Naval Base that the first U-boat had been sunk, a PBY plane was dispatched to the area as a lookout for other subs. Upon arrival in the area, it spotted the oil slick and dropped two depth charges. The *Roper* followed this attack by dropping an additional two depth charges in the same area. At 0706, the plane dropped smoke floats to mark the bodies in the water. The *Roper's* crew launched several boats to recover the dead while the plane kept an eye out for other subs. Meanwhile, the *Roper* started sounding for the sub's hull. At 0850, it made a strong contact. This was followed by the dropping of four more depth charges. By 0932, 29 bodies had been recovered. Finally, at 0957, the *Roper* dropped two more depth charges on the hull. Before setting course for Norfolk, Howe ordered a buoy placed over the approximate area of the *U-85* hull.

When the *Roper* docked in Norfolk, the ship was greeted by Naval intelligence in whose charge were placed the 29 bodies recovered. After a thorough examination, the bodies were laid to rest at Hampton National Cemetery.

The U.S. Navy immediately tried to raise the *U-85* hull. Her 100 foot grave was well within the salvage technology of the day. After two attempts, divers came to the conclusion that she had been successfully scuttled. To raise her hull would take excessive pontooning and this was not practical. In the end, she was abandoned to a deep, watery grave. There her hull would serve as a crypt for the remaining crew members. The report filed by U.S. Navy divers makes interesting reading at the U.S. Naval History Center, Washington, D.C.

THE *U-85* TODAY

Flashing the OK sign, Bob Fisher and I started our descent. At 65 feet the cur-

rent subsided and the azure blue water turned a pale green. Just coming into view were the shadowy remains of the *U-85*. Diving on many wrecks over the years had shattered many of my boyhood images. Too often their remains had been blasted into oblivion as hazards to navigation. Passing the 80 foot mark, I realized this would not be the case today. Lying on about an 80 degree list to starboard was a remarkably intact U-boat.

While Bob checked our anchor set, I began exploring the hull. Sea worms had long ago devoured the *U-85's* wooden deck. Just aft the conning tower was a large incision in the pressure hull. Having studied the *Roper's* log, I knew this was where the three inch shell found its mark.

As Bob joined me, we swam up to the bridge. The outer hatch had been removed. Shining a light down the dark corridor, I could see the inner hatch was open. A thought that this tight corridor might present access to the control room crossed my mind, but I decided against the attempt.

In front of the conning tower, we discovered the *U-85's* coral encrusted 88 mm deck gun, its barrel pointing straight up. Using my knife, I removed some of the colorful encrustation. To my surprise, a tribute to German metallurgists appeared. The barrel still shone like new! Swimming toward the bow, we discovered the forward hydroplanes. They were still set to the sharp dive the crew hoped would take them to safety. Swimming around the bow, I photographed the forward torpedo tubes. Using my light, I could see she had gone down with her muzzles loaded.

Satisfied I had sufficiently documented the exterior, I searched for easy access to the hull. After scrutinizing all the possibilities, Bob and I decided on the forward torpedo loading hatch. It afforded the necessary space to clear our tanks and opened directly into the forward torpedo room. We squeezed through the hatchway, our lights revealing excellent visibility. The inside was a maze of twisted pipes and floating debris which we cautiously began to explore.

Panning my light around the chamber, I saw a long, cylindrical object. A closer look revealed a torpedo resting in its cradle. While I estimated an f stop for my camera, my flippers raised a cloud of silt. Reluctant not to at least try a shot, I tripped the shutter release. The silt particles lit up like a million stars on a clear night. Before I had another attempt at this unique shot, Bob started pointing to his instrument console. He was getting low on air and we were out of bottom time. Reluctantly, we departed the gray wolf's dark interior and headed toward the anchor line. Ascending it to 80 feet, I stopped and turned for one last look at the *U-85*. The sight brought to mind something Sigmund Freud once wrote: "Happiness is a childhood dream fulfilled in adulthood."

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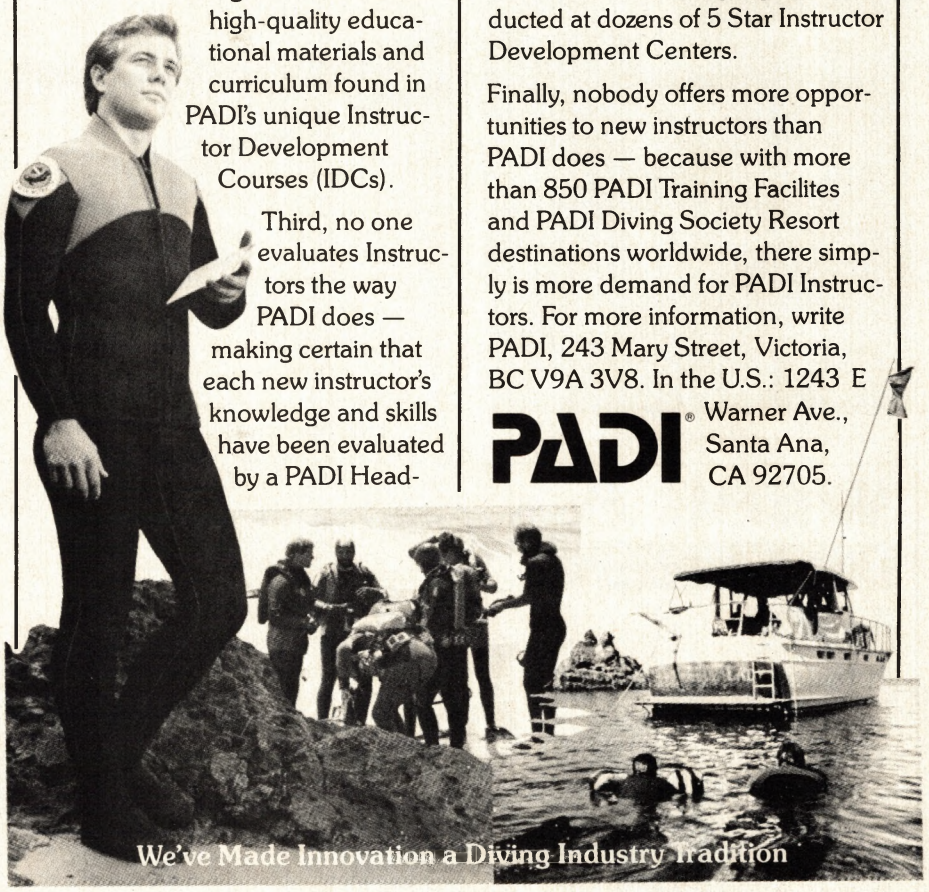
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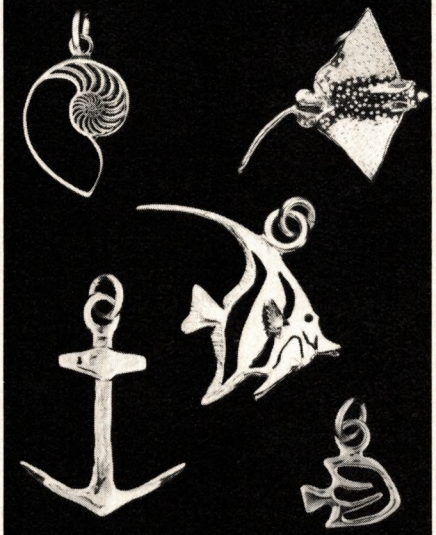
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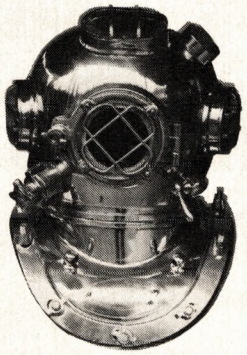


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TECHNIFACTS

(Continued from Page 42)

out and radio antennae flattened. One tug returned to port but the larger one finally reached the area of grounding—remaining offshore until the weather calmed.

At the barge stranding, Hawaii's emergency forces had responded. Police, fire department rescue helicopters, Civil Defense crews, the contractor's crews and Pat's divers were at the scene early Monday morning

The large crane barge that had been used to handle sections of huge outfall



photos/E.R. Cross

The three barges aground in the surf off the west coast of Oahu. From left: work barge, anchor scow, batch plant barge.

sewer pipes was aground stern first and pounding heavily in the surf. The slightly smaller barge carrying the concrete batching plant and material was broadside to the reef and breakers. It, too, was bouncing heavily on the bottom but was also smashing broadside into the face of the reef. The third barge, a small anchor handling scow, was in shallower water and sliding back and forth across a couple of hundred feet of reef shoreward of the batch plant barge.

A dive crew was lifted by the fire department helicopter to the deck of the batching barge. While breakers crashed across it, the divers unbolted and removed hatch covers from the deck and then entered the violently active hull to look for damage. They found relatively little. Hatch covers were left off so the barge would flood completely and sink solidly to the reef bottom to stabilize it and to prevent additional hull damage. When back on deck the divers tied down some heavy equipment that was in danger of being washed overboard.

The divers were next lifted to the deck of the work barge, hard aground by the stern. They entered the hull where they found extensive damage to both the plating and structural members. While nearly flooded in most compartments, the barge was still pounding heavily against the reef. Attempts to stabilize this barge were only partially successful.

By Wednesday the weather had calmed enough so additional inspections could be made inside the flooded hulls. Usually a diver inspects a hull from outside. But in breakers, where the vessel is violently in motion and bouncing on the

Flip Schulke
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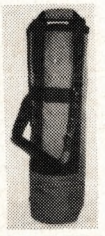
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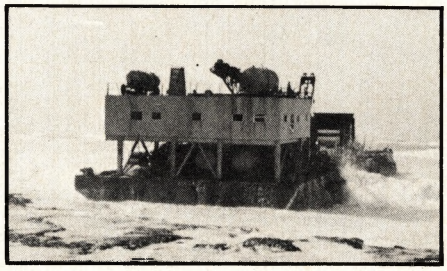
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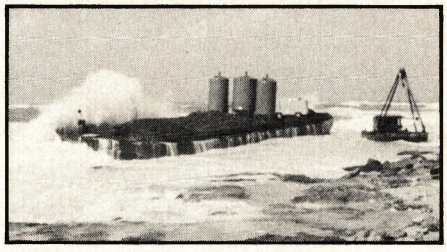
bottom, the inside is the safest place to make an inspection.

Divers first enter the hull through the hatches. Their gear is handed in to them. Working inside the hull is almost like working in breakers except there is no danger of the barge smashing the diver against the bottom. Water sloshes violently back and forth as a result of barge motion in the breakers and the diver must work with great caution. Because of internal bulkheads and other strengthening members, it is sometimes necessary to remove tanks and crawl through a small opening, pulling the gear in.

Divers made some patches in the hull of the batching barge. By Thursday after-



Above: The work barge pounded heavily in the surf and was extensively damaged. It was later sunk to create a dive site. The batching barge and anchor scow (below) were repaired and put back into service.



noon all temporary repairs were completed. Hatches were replaced and battened down and that barge was pumped free of most of the water. The small anchor scow was pulled ashore by a bulldozer and temporary repairs made. Hull and side plate damage to the large work barge was so extensive that underwater repairs could not be made watertight. Using a large air compressor, air was forced into all compartments until the barge literally floated off the reef on compressed air. By sunset all barges were afloat and under tow.

A dive team was kept in readiness on board each of the barges during the tow to Honolulu. Pumps were kept in operation to slow any water entering. Nothing of importance developed during the 30 mile trip.

The barges remained in drydock for the next several weeks. During this time complete surveys were made to determine the extent of damage. The anchor scow and the batching barge were economically repairable, owing in large extent to the efforts of the dive crews in

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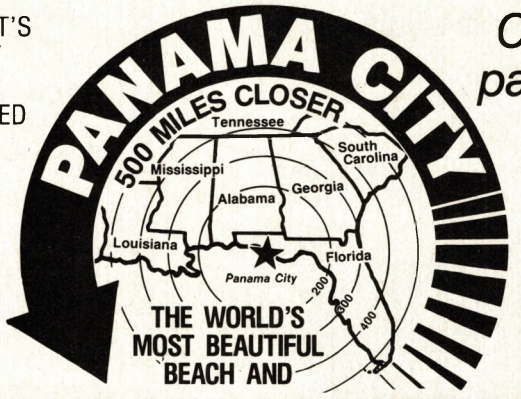
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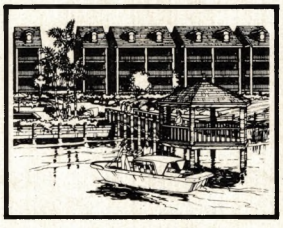


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sinking the barge to make it stable and stop its pounding in the surf. The larger, multi-million dollar work barge was deemed a total loss. If this barge could also have been sunk to prevent excessive pounding during three days in the heavy surf, it, too, may have been repairable.

Divers are not usually called on to work under the severe conditions cometimes present in "the primeval meeting place of the elements of earth and water." When this is necessary, well trained, properly equipped and supervised divers can work successfully under such conditions.

POST SCRIPT

In early March 1985, residents along the southwest shore of Oahu were startled to see what resembled a great black whale broaching the surface of the blue waters of Maunalua Bay, between Diamond Head and Koko Head. First the hulk was almost level. Then it slanted up at a sharp angle. Finally, now nearly perpendicular, it slipped quickly beneath the water. Then, as great boils of air bubbles blew to the surface, the hulk settled, again almost level, onto the ocean floor 100 feet beneath the surface.

Such was the ignoble but useful end to the breaker-battered work barge, salvaged by commercial divers from the smashing surf and now sunk in quiet waters to form an artificial reef for the benefit of sport divers.

MORE RIVERS AND DAMS

A letter was recently received from Daniel J. Lenihan, Chief, Submerged Cultural Resources Unit of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. He wrote, "I read your recent article on rivers and dams in SDM (March 1985). I enjoyed most of it, though I can't say I approve of actively encouraging artifact hunting on public lands, submerged or otherwise. Seeing the piece on dams reminded me, however, that you and I had some interesting communication ten years back on high altitude diving when our office was working on the National Reservoir Inundation Study. I don't have a record of sending you a copy of the final report of that project so I have enclosed one to correct that oversight. Thanks again for the help you provided back then. The booklet we developed on *High Altitude Diving*, which I did send to you ten years ago, owed much to the insights and observations from your own experiences that you shared with me and the rest of the diving community."

Indeed I do remember the interesting correspondence and the opportunity to share my high altitude diving and decompression experiences and tables.

I would also like to point out that I am not specifically trying to encourage diving

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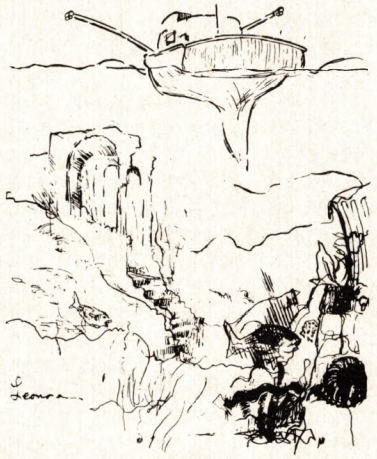
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for artifacts on sunken lands. I know, and I am sure the National Park Service is also aware, that thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of people actively hunt and recover artifacts of all sorts on dry and submerged lands, both public and private. Such collecting has been going on for generations and will continue. What I am trying to encourage is for all, but particularly divers, to share their finds with science and the public.

Next month Technifacts will share some of the interesting finds and the work accomplished by archaeologists that are detailed in the two volumes received from Daniel Lenihan. Their work involves maintenance, evaluation and salvage of threatened archaeological resources, mostly those submerged in the waters behind dams. Be with us for some surprising facts.

SCUBA NATIONALS

The Great Plains Diving Council will host the National Scuba Championships, June 14-16 at Lake McConaughy, near Ogallala, Nebraska. The championships are sponsored and sanctioned by the Underwater Society of America.

The competition will include scuba skills and spearfishing. Events in the scuba skills competition will be gear exchange, buddy breathing and underwater navigation. The gear exchange and buddy breathing competitions will be held in a swimming pool. The underwater navigation and spearfishing competitions will be held in the lake.

Lake McConaughy is about 26 miles long and has an uneven shoreline. Visibility varies from 5-30 feet. The bottom consists of rock, clay and sand. All species of rough fish except shad may be taken during the tournament. (In a local tournament in June 1983, more than 7,000 pounds of rough fish were speared.) A Nebraska fishing license is required.

More information may be obtained from Jack Edsill, President, Great Plains Diving Council, P.O. Box 940, Kearney, Nebraska, 68847; (308) 234-2201 or Mac Heard, Director of Scuba Competition, Underwater Society of America, 4101 Cedar Drive, Farmington, New Mexico, 87401; (505) 324-5341.

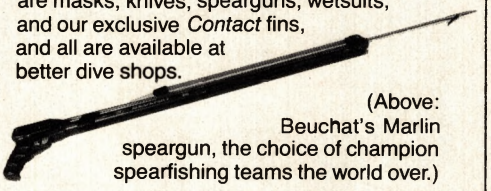




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WRECK FACTS

(Continued from Page 14)

This was the beginning of what turned out to be an exciting and interesting search.

"Glenn Marshall of the New Windsor police department researched the origin of the bell. It had been presented to the captain and crew of the S.S. *New Windsor*, a 6,000 ton merchant vessel built at Newburgh Shipyard, New Windsor, 1919. One of 12 ships, each named after a small community in the Hudson Valley, the *New Windsor* never saw service in WW I because the war ended before it was completed. The bells were the result of a campaign inspired by patriotism and community pride."

Peter and Glenn traced the *New Windsor* and learned it was taken out of commission, but purchased later by the Alcoa Steamship Co. Renamed the S.S. *Alcoa Mariner*, she was torpedoed off the coast of Venezuela by a German sub in September 1942. Alcoa Company officials say the ship rests in 80 feet and supplied the wreck's coordinates. Another ship, the *Alcoa Transport*, is sunk nearby. It has never been determined how the original ship's bell got to Beaumont, Texas but Alcoa officials say the *Alcoa Mariner* might have another bell on it with the original inscription from the people of New Windsor. Peter and his dive buddies intend to find out. They are planning a trip to Venezuela and need information. If any readers have been on any wrecks off the coast of Venezuela or northern Guiana and know of dive operations, rental boats, etc., contact Peter Miller, 2 Blackwell St., Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, NY 12520.

I've discovered an excellent book, *Diver's Guide to the Philippines* by David Smith, Michael Westlake and Porfirio Castaneda. A hardcover with color photos, maps and detailed descriptions of the best dive sites in the Philippines, the book contains an introduction by Valerie Taylor. She describes some of the wrecks, pinnacles, drop-offs and marine life and calls the reefs "some of the richest marine areas" she has ever explored.

New Jersey divers might be interested in a new book, *Shipwrecks Near Barnegat Inlet*, by David Seibold and Charles Adams. David says: "We only cover about 30 wrecks in the area. Half of them are popular dive sites while the others have been salvaged or have deteriorated. Wrecks such as the *Cedar Creek*, *Peresphone*, *Chapparra*, *San Saba* and others are covered in detail." The book, $6 including postage, may be ordered from David Seibold, 15 Hawthorne Rd., Wyomissing Hills, PA 19611.

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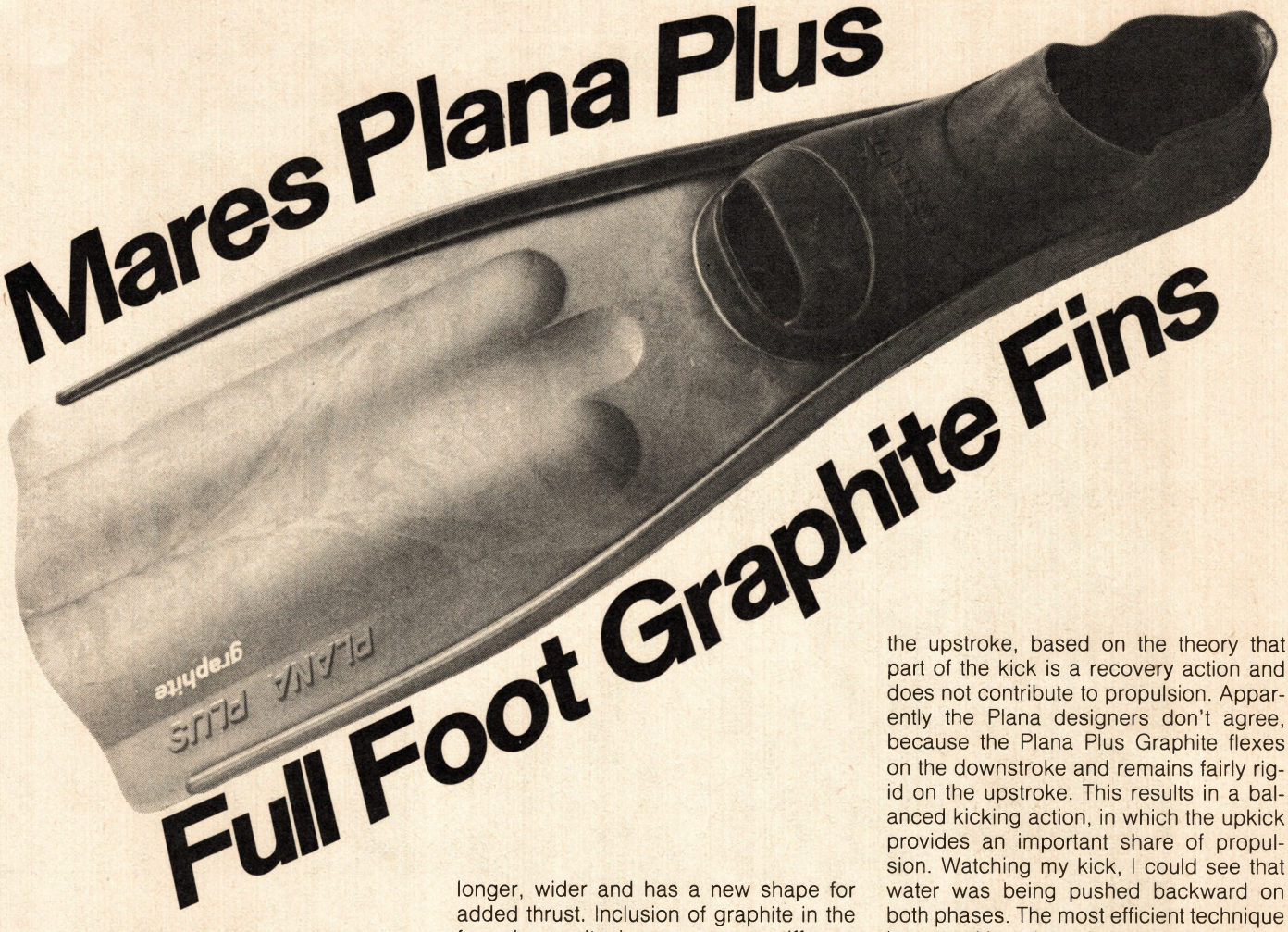
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Mares Plana Plus Full Foot Graphite Fins



TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERIC HANAUER

Mares started the thermoplastic fin revolution with its original Plana, back in 1979. The Plana was the first successful attempt to utilize space-age technology in the manufacture of a lightweight fin for scuba divers. Divers immediately embraced the fin because it provided power with minimum effort, because it felt good while kicking and because it saved a pound or so of overweight baggage charges on international flights.

Mares realized it had a hit on its hands, so the company applied the Plana's technology to an open heel fin with more blade area, the Power Plana. When other manufacturers introduced plastic fins, Mares added graphite to the blade composition and the Power Plana Graphite was born. Now the company has turned its attention back to the fin that started it all. Incorporating suggestions from users, Mares has introduced a new full foot fin, the Plana Plus Graphite.

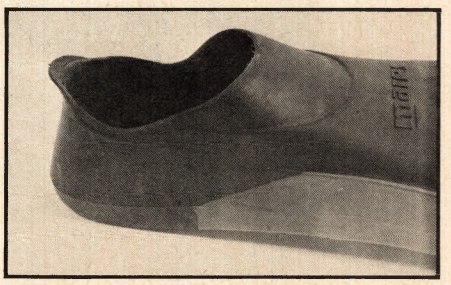
More than an update of the original, the Plana Plus Graphite is an entirely new product: A full foot fin with more power. Its foot pocket has been completely redesigned for added comfort. The blade is longer, wider and has a new shape for added thrust. Inclusion of graphite in the formula results in even more stiffness, ranking the new fin somewhere between the Power Plana and the Power Plana Graphite in the thrust department.

Because of its gentle taper, the new foot pocket is more comfortable. Thinner edges may cause it to look slightly distorted, but it feels softer and more comfortable on the foot. The reinforced heel is anatomically shaped and a tab makes removal of the fin easier. The toe area is recessed and rounded, with a rise in the front end that allows the toes to flex and grip on the upstroke.

Full foot fins are intended primarily for divers in tropical waters; they don't lend themselves to wearing over booties. Since winter ocean temperatures in Southern California preclude comfortable barefoot diving, we tested the Plana Graphite Plus in the tropical waters of the Cal State Fullerton swimming pool.

The new fin proved to be a strong performer. Its blade is actually an inch longer than that of the Power Plana, but the redesigned profile is the secret of its performance. A couple of convex channels on the top of the blade allow more flex on the downstroke, but stiffen on the recovery phase. That runs counter to current practice, but in this case it works.

Many fins today are molded to flex on the upstroke, based on the theory that part of the kick is a recovery action and does not contribute to propulsion. Apparently the Plana designers don't agree, because the Plana Plus Graphite flexes on the downstroke and remains fairly rigid on the upstroke. This results in a balanced kicking action, in which the upkick provides an important share of propulsion. Watching my kick, I could see that water was being pushed backward on both phases. The most efficient technique began with a bent knee on the downstroke and a continued application of force on the straightlegged upstroke. Whether kicking on the side, back or prone position, effort expended on the upstroke was rewarded with more thrust.



The heel tab facilitates fin removal.

Treading water and sculling proved to be easy and efficient with the new Plana. Both techniques favor a stiff blade.

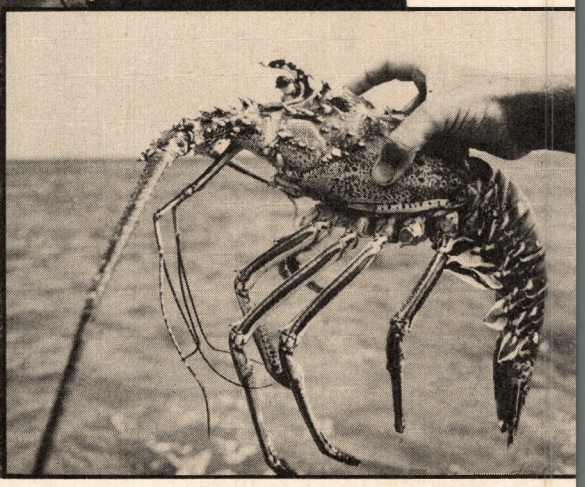
The Plana Plus Graphite is a power fin for warm water divers who prefer a full foot model. It comes in six sizes, from 4-5 all the way up to 11-12. The generous foot pocket will accommodate even wide feet. Retail price is $45 to $50, depending on the size. Along with other Mares products, the fin is available at your SeaQuest dealer.

GAME DIVING SERIES

Florida Crawfish

Lobster Diving Southern Style

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY M. TIMOTHY O'KEEFE



Just as grits, cornpone and good chili are particular to the southern part of the country, so is the Florida lobster. *Panulirus argus* is quite distinctive in the absence of claws, a feature so prominent on its northern counterpart. This has both its good and bad points: It means the spiny lobster is easier to catch since a diver doesn't have to worry about fingers getting mashed in a hearty handshake, but there's also less lobster to eat. *Panulirus argus* is so named because of the many sharp spines on its sides and the spiny-looking antennae. The term crayfish is also used. The spiny lobster is found in both Florida and the Caribbean. In Florida, the most productive areas are from the Palm Beaches southward. Lobsters typically migrate in the fall following spawning and molting. Not long ago it was discovered these migrations can involve thousands of the creatures, in both Florida and Mexico, after the first winter storm. It's then the creatures seem most compelled to move into deeper water, forming long lines as they travel, a moveable feast for the diver lucky enough to find them.

Normally, you have to be content taking lobsters one at a time. During the day they are found on reefs, around jetties and even artificial reefs. Since artificial reefs are often visited only by line fishermen, they can be well worth regular weekday visits when this angling activity is lowest.

In shallow water it's possible to cover considerable lobster territory by dragging a snorkeler slowly behind a boat. Then, when a lobster is sighted, the diver can simply let go and descend to capture his/her meal. No one should tackle a spiny lobster bare handed. Its spiny shell is sharp and most unpleas-

ant to grab. Heavy gloves are a must.

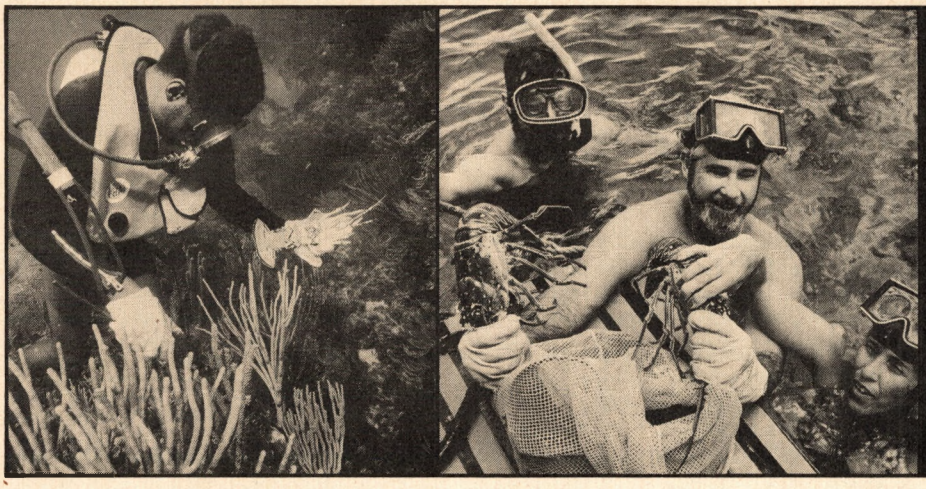
The natural urge the first time you see a lobster is to grab it by the antennae. That's fine if all you want is a matched set of antennae: They are usually too delicate to put up with much man-handling and break off.

Lobsters, however, are fairly curious and not very bright, so if you haven't spooked one too badly, you may be able to lure it out by cunning and guile. How? Simply beckoned to it with your finger while you keep the rest of your body motionless. The lobster may become curious enough about the movement that it will come out of its hiding place.

Suppose your lobster doesn't want to play games but wants instead to stay at home. How then do you get it out? The obvious answer is to reach in and grab it. The only problem is that lobsters sometimes have roommates, such as sea urchins, scorpionfish and moray eels. On the other hand, you may find two lobsters where you expected one. The procedure, in any case, is to indelicately grab the lobster by its head and pull strongly, twisting at the same time, to dislodge it. Or, if there's room, spread your hands, reach in the opening and grab.

Understandably, some people are squeamish about sticking their hands any place where the fingers might get punctured or nibbled, so there are several other methods equally effective. If a lobster's hiding place has a sand or mud bottom, stir it up with your hand or an old broom handle. Then move back to the edge of the muddy water. The lobster will usually leave its cave.

Lacking a dirt floor, you can try what's called "tickling" the lobster, though this really is a misnomer since it's doubtful a lobster feels anything through his shell. For tickling, place a blunted broom handle or stick into the hole and tap the lobster on the tail. You shouldn't need to jab or gouge it to get it out.



***Panulirus argus*, the Florida spiny lobster, has no claws but does have many sharp spines. Gloves should be worn when handling these animals. This delicacy is prized by marine predators and divers so restrictions on its capture are strictly enforced. Lobsters should measure three inches from the point between the "horns" to the back of the carapace. Egg-bearing females may not be collected and all lobster should remain whole until brought to shore. The limit is 24 lobsters per boat, regardless of the number of people aboard.**

However, if the lobster is in a hole too small or one that lacks a back entrance so you can't get to it, tickling won't work at all. The only thing to do then is grab.

A tickle stick is about the only device you can use in Florida since state law forbids any mechanical device, hooks or spears for taking lobster.

Lobsters will sometimes break free of a diver's grip, but even when that happens the lobster shouldn't be considered lost. While it may appear to be moving at jet speed, this burst typically occurs only once and the path of flight is normally in a straight line. If a lobster does get free, swim after it as fast as you can. Chances are you'll soon find it crawling along.

If things that go bump in the night don't bother you, late evening is perhaps the best time to dive for lobsters. At night the spiny lobster is more likely to venture forth in search of food.

Regardless of the time you choose to search, there are some legal requirements that need to be kept in mind. Laws governing the capture of lobsters are strictly enforced.

Lobsters must remain whole, in one piece, until brought to shore. You can't simply keep the tail and discard the rest. Egg-bearing females may not be kept and should be released immediately. The possession limit is 24 lobsters per boat, regardless of how many people are aboard. Residents need a special permit from the Department of Natural Resources to take more, whether for commercial or personal use.

Lobsters are also subject to size restrictions. The legal measurements are a minimum of three inches from the point between the "horns" to the back of the carapace, or 5 1/2 inches in the case of separated tails. Measuring devices are available at all dive shops.

The regular season starts July 26 and runs through March 31. However, a special two day sport lobster mini-season is held July 20 and 21, when the possession limit is changed to six lobsters per person per day. This often is the most productive and crowded two days of lobstering during the year.

The spiny lobster is not only a delicacy, it is delicate and should be kept cool in some way. Like crabs, lobsters can sometimes be kept alive for several days in an ice chest or refrigerator. Once a lobster dies, the tail should be removed immediately, as the digestive juices from the intestines and stomach may seep into the tail and body meat, causing contamination. Although the meat is concentrated in the tail, many divers prefer the taste of the leg meat even more, so don't just wring off the tail and throw the rest of the lobster away.

Lobsters can be cooked in any number of ways. Boiling is the easiest method: A live lobster is dropped into boiling, salted water head first and cooked according to weight. It takes about seven minutes for a one-pound lobster (the most common size), 12 minutes for two pounds, 15 minutes for three to five pounds and about 20 minutes for a really big bug going six to ten pounds. Once cooked, the lobster should be placed under cold water for a few seconds, then served while still hot.

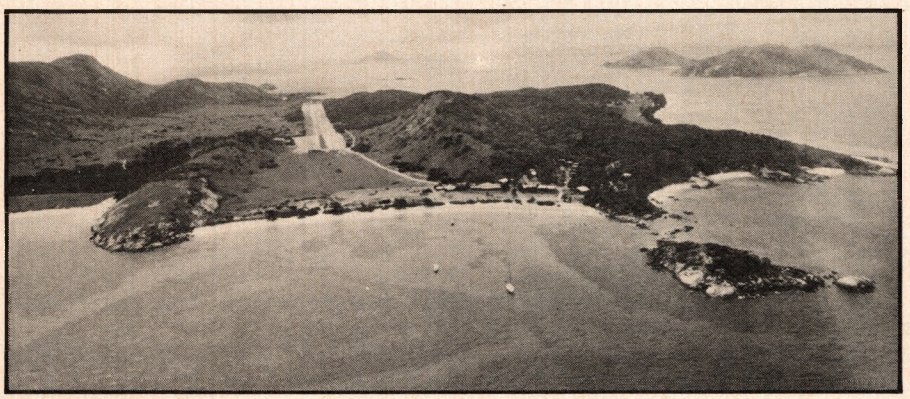
Broiling is good, too, but too many cooks make the mistake of leaving it uncovered, which tends to dry it out. Basted with butter and paprika first, the lobster should be wrapped in foil, placed about six inches from the heat, then cooked for about 12 minutes on the meat side, another ten on the shell side. Brush it down again before turning.

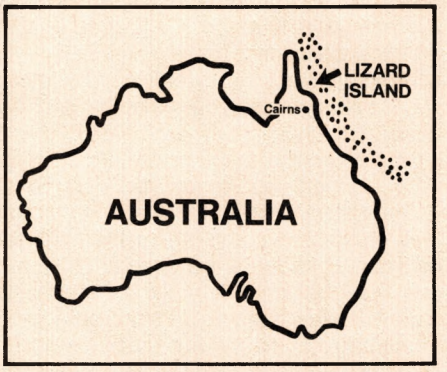
Served with chilled white wine, garlic toast and a tossed salad—there aren't many better ways to end a diving day.

Diving News From Down Under

Lizard Island Resort Expands

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERI MURPHY







Lizard Island is 160 miles north of Cairns, 20 miles off Cape York on the Queensland coast. With only 2,500 acres, the island has its own airstrip, accommodating daily Air Queensland flights from Cairns. Lizard Island Lodge is undergoing major redevelopment and will accommodate 65 guests in 32 private bungalows. One of Lizard Island's main attractions is the population of iguanas. These animals roam freely around the resort.

Lizard Island, one of Australia's most exclusive hideaway resorts, is undergoing a $3 million expansion program. Tucked away on a small island at the northern end of the Great Barrier Reef, Lizard Island Lodge has long been known as a VIP resort for film stars and heads of state. In the past, the lodge consisted of 15 bungalows that could accommodate 30 guests. It offered the ultimate in privacy and tranquility.

Lizard Island built much of its reputation on superb big game fishing (marlin), secluded beaches (24 of them) and fabulous snorkeling. Only in the last four years has the island become known to divers. The discovery of coral covered Dynamite Pass and the incredible Cod Hole (less than eight miles away) have made Lizard Island Lodge the most desirable land based resort on the Great Barrier Reef.

According to Dive In Australia's president, David Loughnan, Lizard Island Lodge is undergoing a major redevelopment program that will increase both the number of accommodations and the services. Lizard Island will double its size, bringing guest accommodations to a total of 32 private bungalows. The lodge will be able to comfortably host 65 people and still maintain its "personal touch" service.

New facilities will include a freshwater swimming pool and a complete dive shop on the premises. There is already a tennis court and a three hole sand golf course. Watersports facilities include sailboats, paddleboards, outboard powered skiffs and sailboards. Scuba diving and snorkeling are available year-round. The best diving is from September through March.

One of the major diving attractions of the Lizard Island area is the Cod Hole, a one of a kind experience that has become legendary in the annals of Australia diving. The Cod Hole is a small area in a pass between two reefs where a group of five to nine giant groupers has lived for many years. These huge creatures, known to Australians as potato cod, are extremely tame and can be handfed by the dive guides and photographed up close. The big fish range in size from 80 to 160 pounds and are extremely docile.

Loughnan believes, "Lizard Island will be comparable to the best dive resorts anywhere in the world. Less than one hour by boat from some of the finest dive spots in the Ribbon Reefs, this offshore resort is on the edge of a diver's paradise. Lizard Island will cater to those who desire the comforts of a shore based luxury resort, but still want to see some of Australia's best diving."

Lizard Island is 160 miles north of Cairns, the northernmost resort city on the Queensland coast. The island lies 20 miles off uninhabited Cape York. It sits almost on the edge of the Great Barrier Reef. It is a small, rocky island of only 2,500 acres with extremely unique flora and fauna. One of its greatest attractions is its large iguanas (lizards). Some of them grow to be four feet long and have become pets that amble around the resort property.

Lizard Island Lodge has its own 3,000 foot, graded airstrip that can accommodate small to medium sized aircraft. Air Queensland operates daily flights from Cairns to the island and the flight takes one to one and one-half hours.

For more information about reservations and prices for diving at Lizard Island Lodge, contact Dive In Australia, Suite 340, 680 Beach Street, San Francisco, CA 94109; (415) 928-4480.

Scubapro's Double Blue

A New Stabilizing Jacket In Tougher Material And Five Sizes

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BONNIE J. CARDONE







The Double Blue is bright blue and coated both inside and out with neoprene. Shown here with a power inflator, it is also available with manual/oral inflator or A.I.R. II. The special no stretch band is secured with a stainless steel quick-release buckle.

Back in 1977 Scubapro introduced a revolutionary buoyancy compensator. Up until that time divers had a choice of either a horsecollar or back mounted BC. Scubapro's new version, called the Stabilizing Jacket, wrapped completely around the diver, fitting like a vest. It surrounded the torso with a chamber of air: on the back, front and all around the arms. On the surface it supported the wearer in an upright position with the head and shoulders above water.

Soon, everyone had a version of the Stab Jacket. None of these, however, is exactly like the original. Scubapro's Stabilizing Jacket is unique. It is the only vest type BC with single bag construction: All the others have both an inner bladder and an outer shell.

The Stabilizing Jacket has proven extremely popular and has been little changed since its introduction eight years ago. And now, there are two. The new Double Blue incorporates all of the Stab Jacket's special features and more: This version is also made of 420 denier nylon pack cloth but the fabric is coated on both sides (instead of just the inside) with neoprene. This makes it extremely sturdy. And, instead of the Stab Jacket's standard orange, the new version comes in blue, hence the name, Double Blue.

Some of the features found on both the standard orange Stab Jacket and the Double Blue include: manual dump valve on top of the right shoulder; large, removable, self-draining pocket with Velcro® flap; CO_2 detonator port; two Velcro hose retainer loops, one on each side; whistle on the one inch spiral inflator hose; and four sturdy nylon D-rings for accessories.

Scubapro's Stabilizing Jackets come without a mouthpiece or inflator, allowing the user to choose the system most suitable for him/her. Inflation options include: manual/oral; power inflator; or A.I.R. II. This latter is a power inflator as well as an extra second stage.

You can get the Double Blue with or without a backpack. This latter has a quick release buckle and another unique feature—a nylon webbing strap that will not stretch. This means it does not have to be soaked in water before you put it on the tank and does not have to be taken off in between dives. The stainless steel buckle opens and closes easily. Stabilizing Jackets are held in place with a nylon webbing chest strap with a quick release buckle. There is also a nylon webbing waist strap with a nylon buckle.

One of the Stab Jacket's special advantages is its lack of drag. When deflated it fits close to the body because of its one bag construction. Also, because it is made of only one bag, it is easier to deflate: There are no compartments to trap air. A side benefit of all this is the wearer does not have to add weight to compensate for buoyancy caused by extraneous air in the jacket.

Many smaller divers have wished for an extra small Stab Jacket and Scubapro intoduced this size two years ago. My Double Blue test model was an extra small and I loved it. I could adjust the straps so it stayed very close to my body. While looking for lobsters or photographing macro critters in a head down position, the Double Blue didn't float up and allow my tank to bang into my head.

The Double Blue has some other very nice features. The bag's seams are tape sealed inside and out. Because the Stab Jacket is all one bag, air flows freely through it as does fresh water when you're rinsing it out.

The Double Blue Stabilizing Jacket comes in five sizes: extra small, small, medium, large and extra large. Without inflator, mouthpiece or CO_2 detonator and with backpack, its suggested retail price is $360. Without a backpack it's called the Universal Double Blue Stabilizing Jacket and the suggested retail price is $290. For more information on the Double Blue or any Scubapro product contact the company at: 3105 E. Harcourt, Rancho Dominguez, CA 90221.

Viking Pro
A tougher drysuit

BY JIM WALKER



The Viking Pro Drysuit is made of tough, rubber coated polyester, reinforced at the boots, shins, knees and elbows. Entry is through a bronze alloy zipper across the back.

photos/Bonnie J. Cardone

Viking has always been serious about drysuits. With a product line engineered for the harsh realities of the North Sea, even its sport models have approached the problems of cold water and abrasion head-on, utilizing ultra-tough outer materials and high-tech insulation. But, there is a growing group of divers that demands more than any sport diving-designed drysuit can offer—even Viking's. These divers are involved in wreck exploration, underwater salvage, ice diving and other applications where long hours are spent in tough conditions.

The Viking Pro Drysuit is, like all Viking suits, made of rubber coated polyester. The inner layer of the coating is natural rubber, making the suit flexible and sturdy. The outer layer is synthetic rubber, which provides a smooth, snag resistant outer surface that is also resistant to ozone, ultraviolet light and chemicals. The synthetic rubber is bright red instead of orange on this year's drysuits.

Unlike neoprene suits, this material doesn't have gas bubbles trapped inside. Thus, the buoyancy of the suit is dependent only on the amount of air inside it. This allows less weight to be worn (than with neoprene drysuits) and the material doesn't compress at depth, which would result in less insulation and buoyancy. The material is highly abrasion resistant and doesn't stretch significantly. The suit won't balloon up if over filled with air. The Pro material is thicker than that of the Sport model, 1,000 grams/square meter as opposed to 800. This makes the suit heavier but gives it 1.3 times the resistance to abrasion.

The suit's seams are sewn and then vulcanized under rubber tape, completely waterproofing them and adding strength. An additional layer of black rubber reinforces the attached boots, shins, knees and elbows.

The sturdy, bronze alloy entry zipper runs across the back of the shoulders and, when closed, is completely waterproof. The wrists have stretchy latex rubber cuffs that seal well. They can be trimmed to accommodate larger wrists.

The Pro suit is available with an attached neoprene or latex rubber hood, or Viking's patented double hood. This latter has an attached hood of the same material as the suit, with a latex face seal and an inner latex hood. The inner hood allows insulating air to circulate around the diver's head, between the latex and outer hoods. The outer hood has a Velcro® strap around the back that allows individual adjustment of the face seal.

Viking suits can be easily patched if anything should ever puncture the material. Additionally, the latex cuffs and hood can be quickly replaced by the owner.

The Viking Pro Drysuit has the same arm mounted exhaust valve as the Sport model. It can be adjusted to maintain a desired pressure of air in the suit, venting automatically on ascent, or can be pressed manually for exhaust. The Pro's chest mounted inflation valve is push-button operated and won't allow water into the suit when the low pressure inflation hose is disconnected.

Viking suits are insulated by the clothing worn under them. For this purpose the company offers a two layer underwear combination. Viking Hygenic Underwear is made of thin polypropylene and worn next to the body. It draws perspiration away, keeping the diver dry and comfortable. Viking Open Cell Underwear is worn over the Hygenic layer. Made of a double nylon laminated, 10 millimeter thick, open cell polyester foam, it also wicks moisture away from the body while providing excellent insulation. It provides nearly equal insulation when wet.

In open water tests the Pro proved very warm and dry. However, I feel two points are worth noting. First, the attached boots are made large to accommodate the underwear booties. Big boots with relatively stiff soles need a big fin pocket. While the boots fit in my standard fins, they were wrinkled. This was not uncomfortable, but lost something in aesthetics. Second, the Pro's double hood is designed to spread out the seal over the head instead of concentrating it at the neck. There is a trade-off here: The hood insulates best when the diver is in a head-up, vertical orientation. However, the air in the hood in this position tends to push the facemask away from the face, allowing water into the mask. If the diver intends to spend much time in a head-up position, one of Viking's other hood options might be more appropriate.

The Pro suit is available in five sizes to fit divers from five and one-half to six and one-half feet tall. It comes with a zippered carrying case, low pressure inflator hose and repair kit. The suggested retail price is $1230. The Hygenic Underwear is $50 and the Open Cell Underwear is $164.

If your diving demands something beyond a sport drysuit, check out the Viking Pro at your local dive store or contact Viking America, 55 Old South Avenue, Stratford, CT 06497; (203) 377-6974.

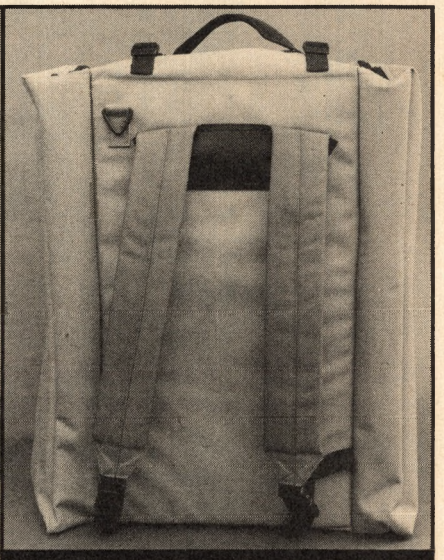


WENOKA'S BAC-PAC

Hands-Free Gear Bag

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BONNIE J. CARDONE





Most gear bags are long and narrow; this one is tall and narrow. Fins and BC go in side pockets; mask, gauges and things that need to be kept dry in the front pockets, everything else fits in the main compartment. Padded shoulder straps allow it to be carried on the back, leaving the hands free.

Just when you think you've seen everything in the way of a gear bag someone comes up with something brand new. In this case the company is Wenoka and the bag is the Bac-Pac. Although it's made of a conventional material—heavy duty nylon (called Z-Tex) coated on the inside with polyurethane—it's an unconventional configuration. This isn't a gear bag that's longer than it is wide, it's taller than it is long! It's made to be carried on your back.

The Bac-Pac has five compartments. The pockets on either end run the height of the bag and have YKK double tabbed Delrin zippers opening two sides. The pockets are big enough (22 x 9 x 3 inches) to hold a pair of fins or a BC. Each has a brass grommet in the bottom for water drainage. On the front of the Bac-Pac are two padded, insulated pockets for your mask, regulator, gauges and/or dry clothing, sandwiches. These measure 11 x 9 x 4 inches. On the front of the top one is a patch pocket for your dive tables, maps, etc.

The main compartment of the Bac-Pac is 22 x 12 x 9½ inches and it is padded front and back. It will hold everything you haven't put in the other four pockets. It has a double tabbed YKK Delrin zipper that opens three sides. Inside is a nylon clip for handy storage of keys. There are two brass grommets on the bottom that allow water to drain.

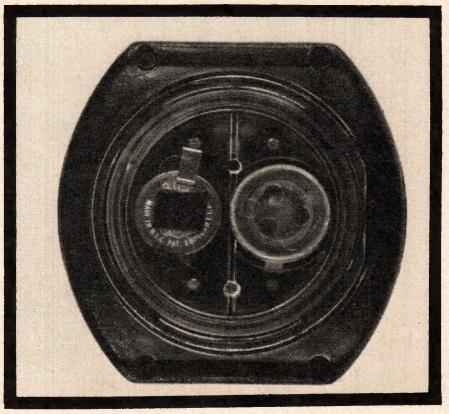
Five sturdy nylon D-rings on outside corners of the Bac-Pac let you attach such things as collapsible polespears or other items that will not fit in the bag, for convenience in carrying. On the top and bottom of the Bac-Pac are nylon webbing straps with quick release buckles that allow you to carry even more. For instance, you could strap a sleeping bag or a jacket on the top. The straps can also be used to cinch the bag narrower when you're carrying a light load. There is a padded nylon webbing handle on top of the bag. On the back are two padded shoulder straps with quick release buckles. All of the Bac-Pac's straps are box stitched for extra strength where they attach to the bag. An extra piece of Z-Tex is sewn underneath for added strength and tear resistance.

The Bac-Pac comes in either blue with red accents or red with black accents. It sells for $76.50. Care of this gear bag is easy: Simply rinse with freshwater and let dry out of sunlight. The Z-Tex material is resistant to fading and should last a long time. Since all the zippers and "hardware" are nylon, there isn't anything on the bag that can rust or corrode.

Wenoka is famous for its dive knives. In case you haven't noticed, the company now sells almost a complete line of top quality dive gear. There is a bag for everyone and every use, wetsuits, booties, hoods, gloves, masks, snorkels and a small U/W light. You can see the Bac-Pac and Wenoka's other fine products at your nearest professional dive store.

DIVE TIMER II

Tekna's New Version With More Bells And Whistles





TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERI MURPHY

In September 1983, Tekna introduced its first Digital Dive Timer, a miniature computer for counting and timing an entire day of diving activities. This intelligent instrument automatically kept track of the number of dives, current bottom time and current surface interval. Needless to say, the device was a hit.

Now, Tekna is once again introducing a revolutionary instrument. It is the second generation of Digital Dive Timers known as T-3100X. It is sufficiently different in design and function to warrant every diver's attention.

The major difference between the original Dive Timer T-3100 and the new T-3100X is the computer circuit. The Dive Timer's brain is a CMOS microprocessor chip which draws little electrical power. CMOS is an acronym for complementary metal-oxide semiconductor, a relatively new technology that will be used in all lightweight computers of the future.

Tekna's new Dive Timer contains a radical improvement in micro chip design, reducing the energy draw by 80 percent. The end result is that the T-3100X will operate for an estimated five years without battery replacement. Its predecessor would only run for one year. These figures are based on the average diver's estimated number of diving days per year. In more precise terms, the Tekna Dive Timer will operate for 40,000 hours. It is powered by a small one and one-half volt lithium battery and draws only 7/1,000,000 of an amp.

Is there any difference in the outward appearance of the new timer? Yes, it is approximately one-quarter inch thicker, but identical in diameter. The thickness of the bezel and body is the tip-off between the two models.

In addition, the new Dive Timer T-3100X has a completely clear back. You can see the battery and the pressure diaphragm that automatically starts and stops the timer.

The new/improved timer is still a featherweight, tipping the scales at 1.25 ounces. It sits comfortably on a diver's wrist, rising up no more than one-half inch and looking much like a wrist watch.

As for functions, the new Dive Timer II offers every function of the older model, plus a new twist. The smallest window on the dial face digitally counts the number of dives in a day, from 1 to 9. The larger window to its right is the bottom timer. It switches on at a depth of six feet and begins tracking bottom time. When you return to the surface, this window freezes the bottom time and the large window on the top of the dial face begins tracking surface time in hours and minutes.

When you begin the next dive, the surface time freezes, the small window moves to the next number and the bottom timer begins tracking bottom time again.

The newest feature on the Dive Timer is that it continues counting the hours after your last dive. When the instrument reaches 12 hours, a symbol of an airplane flashes on the large window indicating it is now safe to fly at a high altitude. This new feature is known as the Safe Flight Indicator. The airplane symbol remains on the screen for a period of four hours before the device shuts itself off.

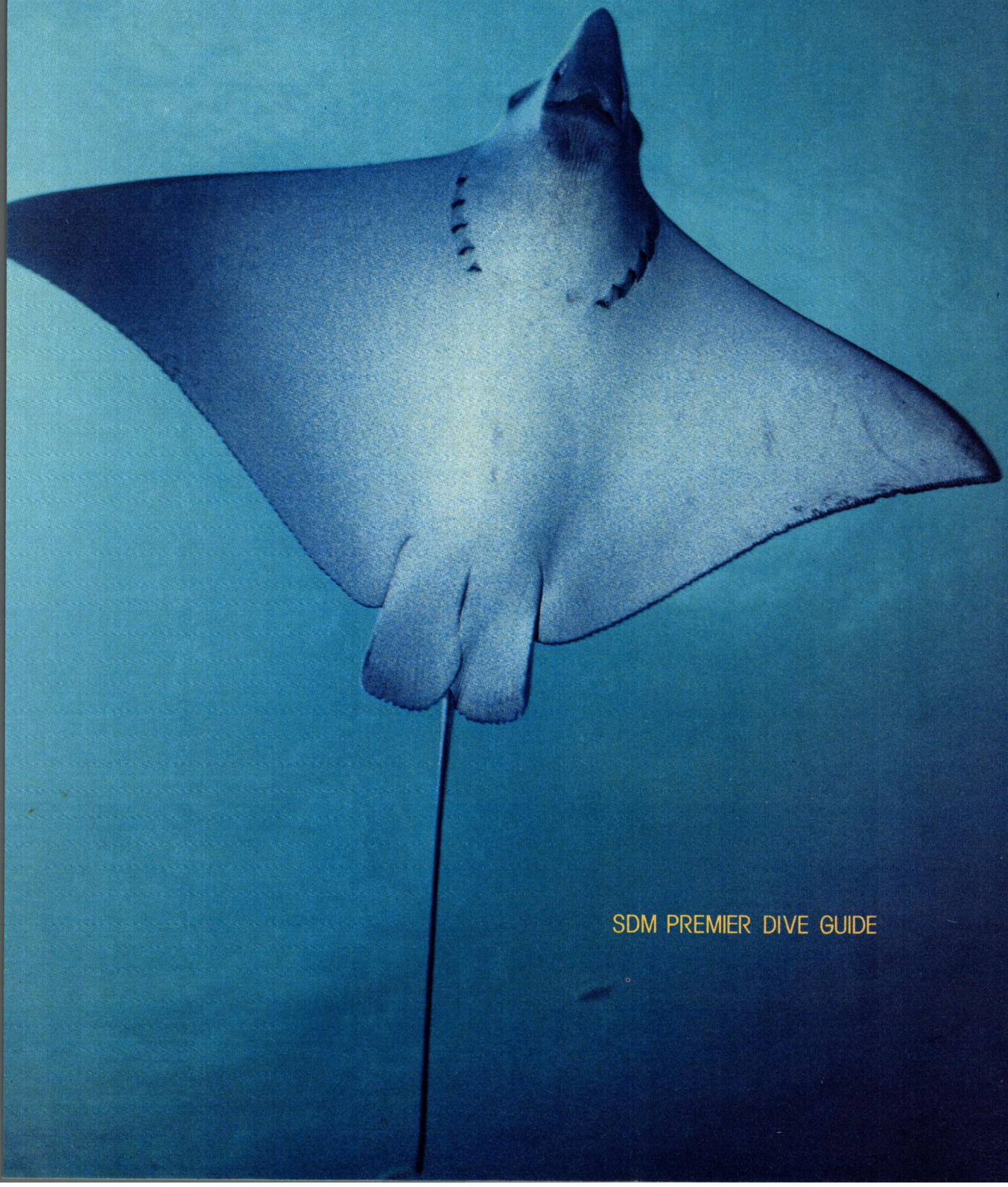
Every function on the Digital Dive Timer is automatic. There are no outside switches or buttons of any kind. The unit is hermetically sealed and should never be opened by anyone other than a Tekna factory technician. Each unit is fully tested for a period of one hour at a simulated depth of 200 feet.

The wrist worn Digital Dive Timer retails for approximately $74.95. There is also a modular unit (T-3101X) that snaps into Tekna Multi-Gauge Combos. The modular unit sells for approximately $64.95.

For more information and literature on the Digital Dive Timer, contact your dive store or write: Tekna, 1075 Old County Rd., Belmont, CA 94002.

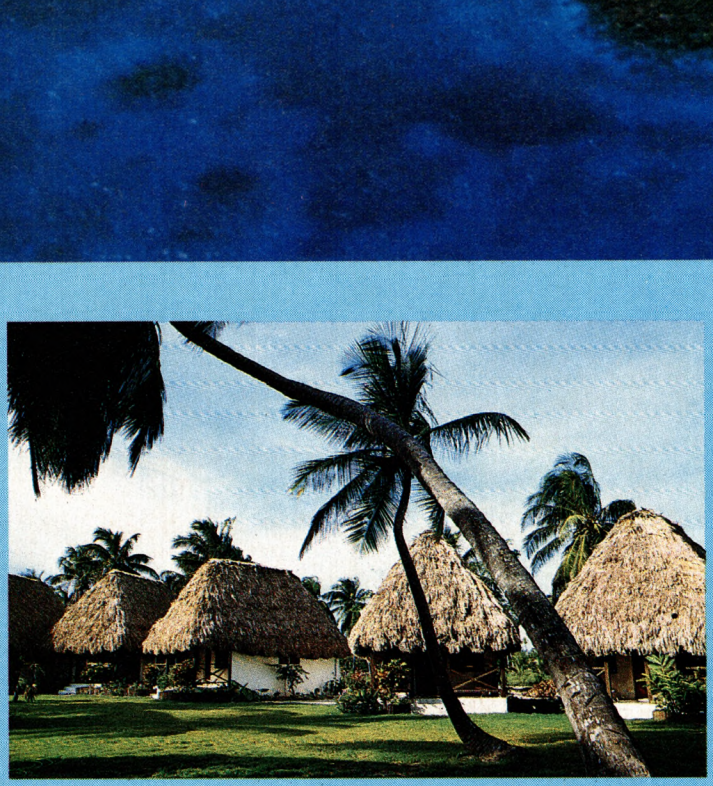
BELIZE

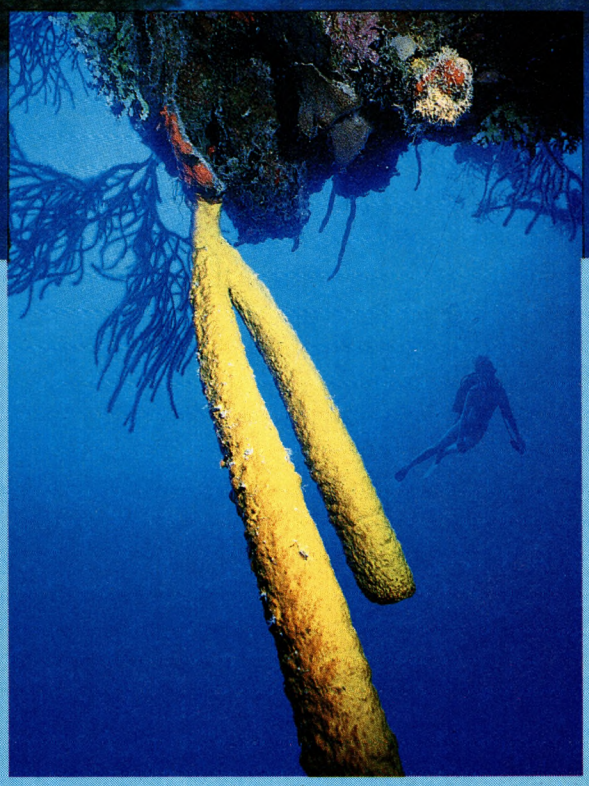
CENTRAL AMERICA



SDM PREMIER DIVE GUIDE

BELIZE





A Small, Friendly Country With A Giant Barrier Reef

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY STEPHEN FRINK



Top: One of the most famous dive sites off Belize is the Blue Hole, a vertical cylinder plummeting into the depths of Lighthouse Reef. Above: Belize diving features more than 335 miles of reefline, 95 percent of which has never been visited by divers. Far left: Victoria House Cabañas, Ambergris Caye. Near left: Yellow tube sponges, Lighthouse Reef.

My first exposure to the magnificence of the Belize undersea resource was just last year, touring the reefs and atolls aboard a Sail Belize live-aboard sailboat. Even though we were able to dive three to five times daily for six days, I returned feeling as though our voyage of discovery had just begun. The sheer size of the coral reef community available to divers is awesome: There are 185 miles of shallow reefs and drop-offs comprising the barrier reef and three more major atolls ringed by a coral perimeter of at least 50 miles each. All of this adds up to more than 335 miles of reefline, of which 95 percent has probably never been visited by scuba divers. There is also mainland Belize, rich with Mayan ruins, fascinating villages, scenic freshwater rivers and waterfalls and lush rain forests. There is a wide range of accommodations, daily flights and a progressive new government seeking to attract tourism. This creates a tremendous vacation potential and I was grateful for the opportunity to learn more about the variety and diversity which is Belize.

LOCATION

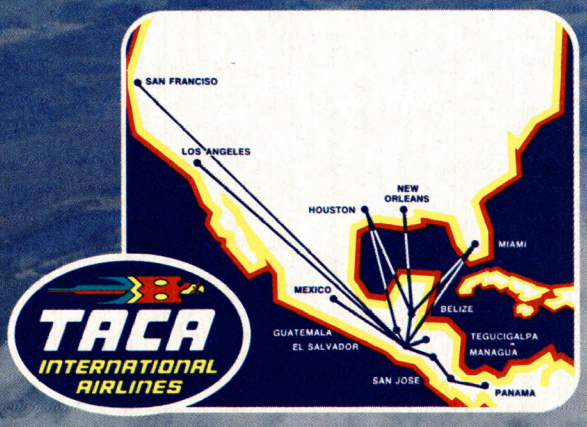
Belize, which prior to September 1981 was referred to as British Honduras, lies along the western shore of the Caribbean Sea just to the south of the Yucatan Peninsula. Bounded on the north by Mexico, on the west and south by Guatemala and separated from Honduras to the south and southeast by another narrow strip of Guatemala, Belize ranges from about 16° north latitude to about 18°30' north latitude or approximately the range from the Virgin Islands to Guadeloupe Island if the Eastern Caribbean is taken as comparison. By geography Belize is Central America, but by temperament and political stability, Belize stands independently apart from the troublespots. Lacking the sharp contrasts between rich and poor that breed dissent elsewhere and drawing from years of British discipline, Belize seems benign and reasonably content.

It is the desire of the newly elected government and significant elements of the private sector to invite tourism to Belize. Agriculture, especially sugar, citrus, timber and fishing are the traditional imperatives, but with so much of the natural resource of interest to the tourist trade, the government is doing its best to make the traveler feel welcome. During our recent visit we met several times with Minister of Tourism Dereck Aikman and his message was one of clear assurance that the diver is especially invited to tour Belize.

The Belizean landscape is especially diverse for an area only slightly larger than the state of Massachusetts. Contained within an area of only 8,866 square miles are humid coastal swamps, mountainous rain forests, beautiful upland plateaus and of course the most unique aspect, the coral islets and atolls. Offshore mainland Belize is a shallow submarine valley with a ridge running parallel to the coast. The visible peaks of this ridge comprise the islets and cayes and it is here that a 185 mile coral barrier reef has developed. It is also interesting to note that of the four atolls of the Caribbean Sea, three are within Belize territorial waters. The fishermen were the first to discover Belize. In the flats bonefish are abundant the year-round, as well as permit and tarpon. Other common sport fish indigenous to Belize include snook, barracuda, jack, grouper, snapper, king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, bonito, blackfin tuna and wahoo. Sailfish, white and blue marlin, wahoo, swordfish and tuna may be

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BELIZE

found in the deep water farther offshore. The same lush marine environment that has spawned an active sportfishing industry is attracting sport divers in ever increasing numbers.

HOW TO GET THERE

Belize is directly accessible from Miami and Houston on a daily basis and from New Orleans twice a week. TACA and Tan Sahsa are the major carriers and both fly modern, comfortable jets. For example, our flight from Miami was aboard a Boeing 737 and took only one hour 45 minutes to Belize City. The flights generally arrive in the mid-afternoon and the traveler has the option to overnight in Belize City, rendezvous with a live-aboard dive boat or sail boat charter or take a connecting flight to one of the cayes. For those wishing to unwind in Belize City and begin travel fresh, there are several hotels just a short ride from the airport. For dive tourists, Belize City will be more a staging area than a destination because boat rides to the best of the diving are prohibitively long for a day trip. But hotels such as the Fort George, the Bellevue and the Villa offer clean, secure and convenient lodging with very good food. Belize City has a population of 40,000 and some duty free shopping, boat charters, banking, etc. It is rather picturesque with its multi-hued wooden buildings, maze of narrow streets and interesting populace. However, the true beauty of Belize is beyond the city and into the mountains or out to sea.



Transportation to Belize is also available by car, bus, train and private boat or plane. By car the 1,350 miles from Brownsville, Texas through Mexico to the border of Belize can be covered in as little as two days, assuming minimal delays owing to burros in the roadway. It costs about $30 to travel by bus from Laredo, Texas to the border of Belize, but encumbered by dive gear and cameras, this might be a bit adventurous for most. The train is another form of public transit, but for speed, convenience and reliability, air travel is the obvious choice.

IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS

Citizens of the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom need round-trip tickets and birth certificates or voter's registration cards as minimal entry requirements. In some cases, a passport may be required to cash traveler's checks. Fishing and diving gear, underwater cameras, etc., may be brought in for personal use without difficulty, although illegal drugs and firearms are understandably frowned upon. When leaving Belize be aware that it is illegal to remove or export coral, to remove archaeological artifacts or to possess orchids from a forest preserve. Note that it is also illegal to spearfish while on scuba.

MISCELLANEOUS

In Belize there is a rainy season and a dry season. The dry season roughly coincides with the winter in North America and the spring is especially attractive for divers as the water is the clearest. Diving can be particularly spectacular during the summer, but since the rainy season runs from May or June to October, it is only reasonable to expect some precipitation. The water temperature is comfortable year-round, with a wintertime low of

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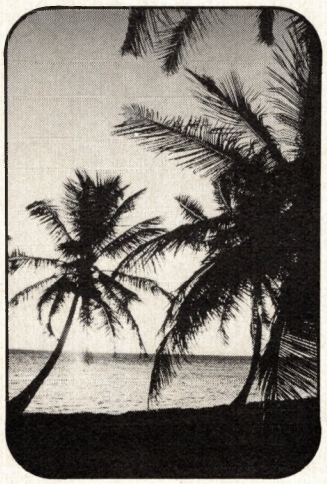
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BELIZE

around 70°F and a summer high in the mid 80s. The air temperature ranges from a daytime high in the 70s in winter to the 80s and 90s during the *maugre* or dog days of August. The underwater visibility can range from 20 to 30 feet or less after a winter storm along the shallows of the barrier reef to in excess of 150 feet along the wall at Lighthouse Reef or one of the atolls. Most of our diving was in visibility between 80 and 150 feet and I assume that to be a normal range.

Both U.S. currency and Belizean dollar (Bz) are accepted most places and the approximate rate of exchange is two Bz to one U.S. Note that prices are sometimes quoted in U.S. dollars and sometimes in Bz. Electricity is generally 110 volts. On some of the cayes where power is by generator, it may not run all night long. There is a modern and reasonably efficient telephone system to serve Belize City and most of the major towns, but direct communication via telephone from most of the cayes is impossible. The hotels generally have VHF radio contact with a supply base in Belize City and calls can be passed along. While an hour one way or the other means very little in Belize (except when catching a plane), the time is Eastern Standard.

The best diving in Belize is available either from a land base on one of the cayes, with day trips to the reef or from a sailboat charter or live-aboard dive boat. Each of these options will be considered in detail.

THE CAYES

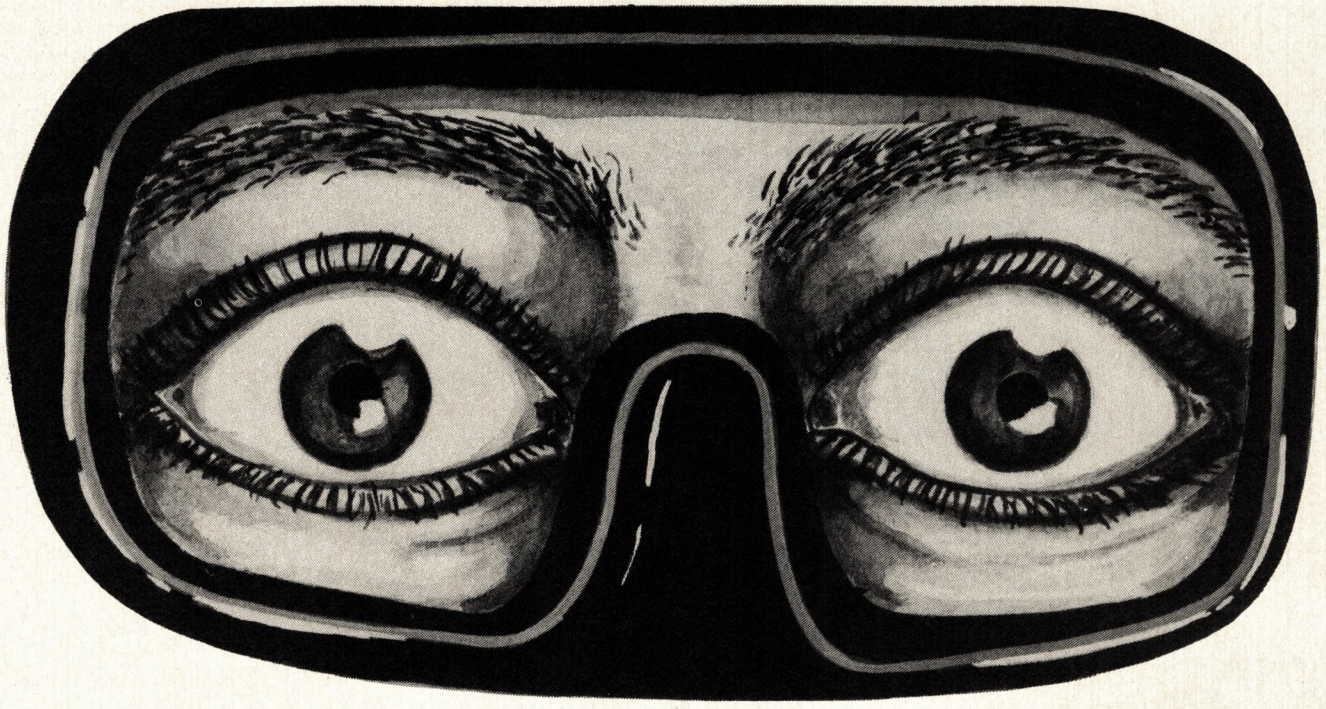
The cayes (pronounced keys) of Belize are spread out along a 200 mile chain that generally parallels the mainland. Some are mere specks barely exposed at high tide, some are uninhabited except for an occasional fisherman and some are fairly well-developed with resort hotels, airports and village. Ambergris Caye, Caye Caulker, Caye Chapel and St. George's Caye are adjacent to the barrier reef, whereas Caye Bokel is in the Turneffe Islands. There is a primitive dive camp at Glovers Reef as well. The Turneffe Islands, Glovers Reef and Lighthouse Reef are the three atolls of Belize and will be described in this section.

AMBERGRIS CAYE

Ambergris Caye is a short commuter flight from Belize City via Maya Airways or Tropic Air and these flights occur several times each day. San Pedro is the major settlement on the 25 mile long island and most of the resort hotels in the area will book the connecting travel as part of their package price. For those wishing to book á la carte, the air fare is around $20 each way and the departures are from

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the municipal airport rather than the international airport. A short taxi ride is necessary to get to the municipal airport.

There are more than 200 offshore islands in Belize and Ambergris Caye is the largest and best developed. A strong fishing and watersports community has developed, probably because of the proximity of the barrier reef. Along most of Ambergris Caye the reef is between one-half and three-quarters of a mile from the beach, but at the north end, Rocky Point and the reef are nearly adjacent. The island is long and thin and is comprised of mangrove swamps, a plateau area and beautiful sand ridges and beaches along the windward shore. It is upon one of these lovely beaches that the village of San Pedro has evolved.

San Pedro is typified by sand streets, pastel painted wooden homes with thatched or tin roofs, fascinating bars, quaint hotels and a friendly and sociable populace. Pick-up trucks, bicycles and foot traffic proceed at nearly the same slow pace along the main thoroughfare and most of the village's 1,000 residents are either engaged in the tourist industry or are fishermen. There are 19 hotels or guest houses and they range from island austere to tropical chic. Some are on the beach, some have their own boats and compressors and some are in town while others are farther removed. Only a few miles separate the resorts at the south end of the settlement from those at the north end and access to the dive spots is essentially the same no matter where you stay. Some guides might be more accommodating than others in determining which dive sites are visited.

It is difficult to address specific sites, because there is interesting diving all along the barrier reef. The barrier reef itself is very shallow, often exposed at low

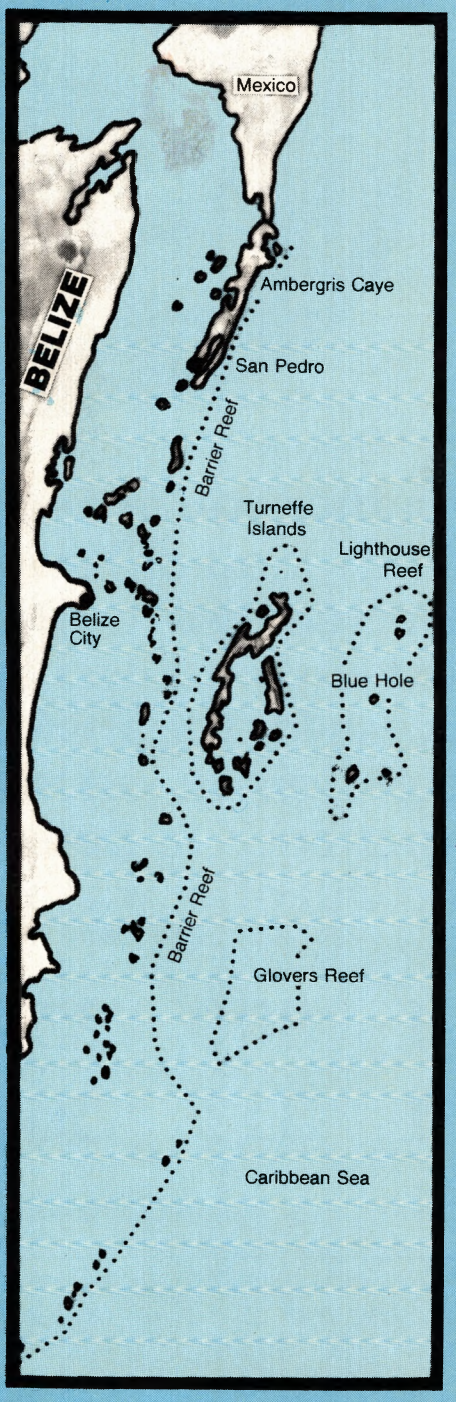
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tide in many areas. Unless the day is flat calm, the surge is too much for diving directly around the shallow portions, but on those perfect days, shallow diving and snorkeling are excellent. There are forests of elkhorn coral, staghorn, brain and star coral heads densely packed along the spine of the reef and all manner of Caribbean tropicals can be found darting among them. Most of the diving is done on the landward side of the barrier reef or along the deeper slope to seaward.

There are two dive sites on the shallow side that most of the guides seem to frequent. **Mexico Rocks** sits in about 20 feet of generally sparkling water on the lee of the barrier reef. Comprised of scattered coral heads over a dazzling white sand bottom, Mexico Rocks is a good place to concentrate on macro photographs or study juvenile tropicals. The marine life is quite rich with angelfish, snapper, grunts, hogfish, parrotfish and lots of conch, but the reef is small for a large group of divers at once. For divers getting reacclimated, resort course classes or snorkelers, Mexico Rocks is the ideal location.

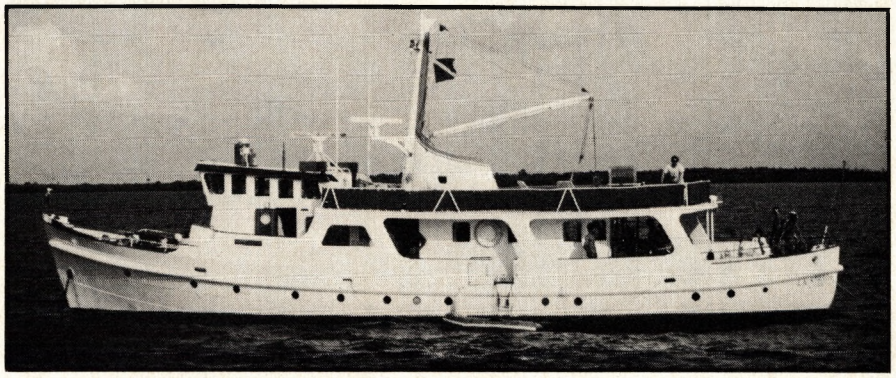
Perhaps the most exciting of the shallow dives is **Hole Chan**. This is actually a cut through the barrier reef and as such is often exposed to tidal currents. But the flow of nutrients also propagates the colorful filter feeders such as tube and barrel sponges, as well as a wide variety of soft corals. The most famous residents of this reef area are the two green morays consistently found along the north wall of the cut. The pair is very used to being hand fed and quite approachable as a consequence. There are queen, French and gray angelfish, schools of grunt, filefish, parrotfish, spotted drum, Bermuda chub and occasional pelagics, such as eagle rays, along the outside edge. Near the surface in the shallows is a magnificent stand of elkhorn coral.

While these two shallow dives are certainly pleasant, I'd like to see the dive guides do more exploring both north and south of San Pedro to discover some new sites in the shallow water range. While there is virtually no limit to the dive sites available on the seaward side of the barrier reef, most of the shallow dives are either at Mexico Rocks or Hole Chan and since the typical dive profile includes a deep dive followed immediately by the shallow dive, these two sites can become overfamiliar by the end of the week.

The deep dives are a gradual slope from about 60 to 110 feet and are of a spur and groove formation running perpendicular to the barrier reef. The water is usually very clear, 60 to 120 feet of lateral visibility and the chances of seeing turtles, eagle rays, southern stingrays or other pelagics are good. However, the reefs offshore San Pedro are not particularly rich in grouper, snapper or other food fish. San Pedro has long been supported by the fishing community and only recently has diving become an important element of the island economy. As a result of this new emphasis, the guides are now beginning to establish fish feeding reefs and are traveling farther north and south of San Pedro to expand the range of the deep dive sites. In the past it was permissible to collect corals, seafans and live shells, but today the dive operators and the government are strongly oriented toward reef conservation. During our visit we did see one group of divers return with goodie bags overflowing with coral, sponges and shells, presumably because the guide wasn't adament about the rules. Of course, if the customs inspector finds the booty, it will be confiscated at the airport and the divers possibly fined, since such activity is definitely against the laws of the country.

The deep dives are further typified by spectacular high profile corals, azure vase sponges, magnificent yellow tube sponges and giant barrel sponges. There are only a couple of cuts through the barrier reef near San Pedro and most of the deep diving is done in the proximity of the cuts. But virtually anywhere along the outside edge of the barrier reef will feature good diving; potential dive sites are

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just beginning to be realized.

At present most of the diving is done from 20 to 24 foot skiffs powered by outboards. These are island built wooden boats and are very fast, but in a rough sea can be uncomfortable. A couple of the hotels are planning dive centers in-house, whereas now they utilize the local guides who will pick up their guests dockside. There are plans for new boats in the 38 foot range to accompany the development of the dive centers. At least one of those will probably be on the island by the time this article appears. The *Reef Roamer* is one exception to the standard San Pedro dive boat flotilla. It is a 37 foot, twin diesel with a small compressor on board, captained by Ray Bowers. Operating from a base at the El Pescadore Hotel and picking up guests at a number of other hotels along the beach, the *Reef Roamer* is available for either day charter or overnight trips with small groups to Lighthouse Reef or the Turneffe Islands.

During our visit to San Pedro we stayed at the VICTORIA HOUSE at the south end of the settlement and found it to be an especially fine hotel with 10 beautiful thatched roof cabañas and 11 double hotel rooms along a landscaped beach. Hotel manager Fidel Ancona spoke of imminent plans to construct a dive shop on the premises to serve guests, with the compressor, gear rental and guest storage facility all dockside. A new dive boat will likely accompany that development, giving the Victoria House the potential to evolve into a first class dive facility. As it is today, the Victoria House is certainly a first class resort with excellent food, service and staff.

Proceeding up the beach from south to north, the next resort is the CASA SOLANA. One and one-half miles south of San Pedro, Casa Solana offers easy access to the village combined with peaceful insulation from the often vigorous nightlife. There are ten rooms in the main hotel and one house with two, two bedroom apartments that share a bath. This provides a total occupancy of 30 guests and there is a bar and restaurant on the premises. A new dive boat and dive facility are also projected for Casa Solana, one more indication of the Belize committment to diver service.

RAMON'S REEF RESORT and RAMON'S TOO will each accommodate 30 guests and the dive operation at each uses the boats and compressor which are at Ramon's Reef Resort. At present there are three 22 foot skiffs and rumor predicts a larger boat with a dive platform, tank racks and a small compressor will soon be delivered. There is a restaurant and bar at both Ramon's Reef and Ramon's Too and about 60 percent of their current clientele are divers. Both resorts are quaint and picturesque, with thatched roofed cabañas, beaches and lots of landscaping.

You will note that many of the resorts are seeking to upgrade at this time, but if the presence of a large, comfortable dive boat is the deciding factor for one hotel over another, I'd recommend seeking confirmation as to the type of boat available before booking the reservation.

The SUNBREEZE HOTEL features nine rooms and is at the south end of San Pedro. The hotel was under construction when we visited. It is owned by the same people who own the Ambergris Lodge. As a result, the boats and compressors at the Ambergris Lodge serve the Sunbreeze as well.

The HOLIDAY HOTEL has 15 rooms and is directly on the beach in San Pedro. Some rooms are large enough to accommodate four people and the overall capacity is about 40 guests. There is a restaurant and bar, as well as boat docks and a dive shop in an adjacent building. Twenty to 24 foot long skiffs are used to accommodate up to 12 divers and a closed-in swimming area at the end of the docks is used for instruction and resort courses. There is no U.S. booking agent for the Holiday House and most promo-

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Phone: 026-2057
U.S. Contact:
P.H. Latshaw
P.O. Box 123
Kansas City, MO 64141
(816) 361-2345

Casa Solana
Jim Kern
P.O. Box 15
San Pedro, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 501-026-2090
U.S. Contact:
Galen Tiffany
Port-O-Call, Inc.
4401 S. Memorial Dr.
Tulsa, OK 74145
(918) 664-1304

Coral Beach Hotel
Allan Forman
P.O. Box 116
San Pedro, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 026-2013
or
Coral Beach Travel Service
172 N. Front St.
P.O. Box 614
Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 02-7036

Mariah Reef Resort
Paul Ripp
San Pedro, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 2768, 3924
U.S. Contact:
Steve Cox
Mariah Reef Expeditions
1776 Independence Ct.
Suite 104
Birmingham, AL 35216
(800) 633-4734

Out Island Divers/
El Pescadore Hotel
Ray Bowers
P.O. Box 7
San Pedro, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 026-2002, 02-7192
026-2151
or
Cathleen Krueger
P.O. Box 793
Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 011-501-2312
U.S. Contact:
Scott Calder Int., Inc.
(800) 223-5581

Paradise Resort/
Triton Dive Shop
Linda McDermott
P.O. Box 888
Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 7403 (Belize City)
026-2083 (San Pedro)
U.S. Contact:
6075 Woodway
Houston, TX 77057
(713) 850-1664

Ramon's Reef Resort/
Ramon's Too
Ramon Nunez
San Pedro, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 026-2071
U.S. Contact:
Four Season Travel Agency
P.O. Box 2996
Meridian, MS 39301
(601) 693-1166

San Pedro Holiday Hotel
Celi McCorkle
P.O. Box 1140
Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 026-2014
011-501-02-44632

Victoria House
Fidel Ancona
P.O. Box 888
San Pedro, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 026-2067
U.S. Contact:
2001 Kirby Dr., Suite 414
Houston, TX 77019
(713) 529-6800

CAYE BOKEL

Turneffe Diving Lodge
P.O. Box 480
Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 011-501-7051 ext, 208
011-501-2331
U.S. Contact:
Dave and Jill Bennett
P.O. Box 9182
Treasure Island, FL 33740
(800) 237-3483
(813) 367-1952

CAYE CAULKER

Belize Diving Services, Ltd.
P.O. Box 667
Belize City, Belize, C.A.

CAYE CHAPEL

Pyramid Island Resort
C.W. Parks
P.O. Box 192
Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Phone: 44190, Radio: Ch 68
U.S. Contact:
Blue Hole Watersports
2926 Maple
Dallas, TX 75201
(214) 647-0400

GLOVERS REEF

Glovers Reef Resort
P.O. Box 563
Belize City, Belize, C.A.

MOHO CAYE

Dive Belize/Sail Belize
P.O. Box 997
Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Radio: Ch 68
U.S. Contact:
Sail Belize
P.O. Box 9182
Treasure Island, FL 33740
(800) 237-DIVE
(813) 367-1952
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ST. GEORGE'S CAYE

St. George's Lodge
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tion occurs via word of mouth. In the past, the bulk of the clientele has been fishermen, but divers are a significant portion these days.

The Ambergris Lodge has been in operation for over 15 years in a central, beachside location. There are nine rooms and one suite, as well as a penthouse (by San Pedro standards) featuring two rooms, a bar and a refrigerator. There is a restaurant, bar, game room and dive shop of sorts on the premises, but the shop is more to provide air fills, tanks and minimal gear rental. The diver packages at the Ambergris Lodge, as well as most of the other hotels, are very modestly priced by Caribbean standards. The dive boat *Amber Lady* is a 36 foot diesel sportfisherman based at the Ambergris Lodge and is another alternative to the open skiffs.

The CORAL BEACH HOTEL has 11 rooms and is a homey, colorful hotel on San Pedro's main street. By looking at the wetsuits draped across every balcony, it is clear that the Coral Beach caters heavily to divers. In fact, the dive shop and compressor across the street, dockside, provide not only the in-house service for guests of the hotel, but also tanks and air to most of the dive guides on the island. There is a great little bar on stilts over the water called the Tackle Box, operated by the Coral Beach Hotel. Inside is a sand floor, a bar made from an old boat and an ocean holding pen with bull and nurse sharks, stingrays, pufferfish, amberjack and turtles.

The PARADISE RESORT HOTEL has 22 rooms, actually thatched roof bungalows, along the beach at the north end of San Pedro. There is a very active nightspot on the premises, a restaurant, four dive guides each with a 24 foot skiff to transport two to eight divers each and a 31 foot Bertram used both for fishing and diving. The *Reef Roamer* frequently picks up divers at the Paradise Hotel. There is an extensive sandy beach, gift shop and spacious landscaped central courtyard. Among other proposed developments for San Pedro, hotel manager Tim Beene intends to install the first E-6 processing lab on the island and has already purchased the necessary hardware.

EL PESCADORE HOTEL is three miles to the north of San Pedro, connected with the town by boat only. This assures privacy and tranquility. Transfers directly from Belize International airport are arranged by the hotel. There are 10 double rooms plus one suite. The hotel's maximum capacity is 24 guests. The beachfront resort has been in operation for 13 years, traditionally catering to fishermen. OUT ISLAND DIVERS, Ray Bowers' dive service, is based at El Pescadore and the hotel is seeking to add divers to its steady stream of repeat customers.

CAYE CAULKER

To the south of Ambergris Caye and about 20 miles from Belize City, Caye Caulker (Cay Corker on some charts) is five to six miles long and has only 400 residents. There is a new airstrip under construction that may augment tourism, but as is, the tourist scene is hardly booming. There are a couple of small hotels and a few guest houses, some restaurants, an ice cream store and reasonably well-equipped dive shop. Aside from dives to the barrier reef, just one mile offshore, there is also a fascinating blue hole just a few yards off the beach. Long known as a lobster haunt, the blue hole drops from a four foot depth to about 15 feet where a cave opening appears. Inside there is a 320 foot long passage big enough for one person (with no room to turn around), that drops to 80 feet and enters a large room with at least a 1,200 foot diameter. This cavern bottoms out at 110 feet and rises to within 30 feet of the surface with stalactites and stalagmites throughout. BELIZE DIVING SERVICES, LTD. operates tours to the blue hole and

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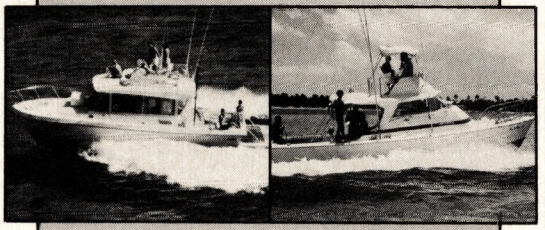
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reefs off Caye Caulker.

CAYE CHAPEL

Only 15 miles from Belize City, Caye Chapel measures only one mile wide by three miles long and is dominated by the picturesque PYRAMID ISLAND RESORT. There are 32 rooms in this completely self-contained resort, as well as a 3,600 foot airstrip, a restaurant and a dive operation. The diving services include tank rentals, some equipment rentals, air fills and guided boat dives to the barrier reef. There are tennis and basketball courts and a golf driving range. There are fuel and water at the well-equipped marina.

ST. GEORGE'S CAYE

Only nine miles from Belize City, the historic island of St. George's Caye was the capital of the settlement from 1650 to 1784. Little is left of those early days, however, as Hurricane Hattie assaulted the island in 1961 and washed away many of the habitations. There are a number of private homes which were rebuilt and the ST. GEORGE'S LODGE. This latter, with 12 rooms and four cottages, is the largest development on the island. Built from Belizean hardwoods and set on stilts to catch the seabreeze, the St. George's Lodge has a distinct charm. The restaurant specializes in seafood and there is a dive shop on the premises to transport guests to the superb snorkeling and diving just offshore.

GLOVERS REEF

Situated 70 miles southeast of Belize City, Glovers Reef is a circular stretch of coral surrounding an expansive lagoon. The cayes on the southeast side of the atoll were the former base of operations for the pirate John Glover, hence the name. The live-aboard boats have been able to sample a small portion of the superb diving potential at Glovers and there is an extremely austere dive resort, the GLOVERS REEF RESORT, with minimal accommodations but a compressor and dive boat. A true Gilligan's Island, Glovers Reef Resort does not have hot water, flush toilets or electricity, but it does have plenty of isolation, sand and blue water and of course, access to some unusually fine diving.

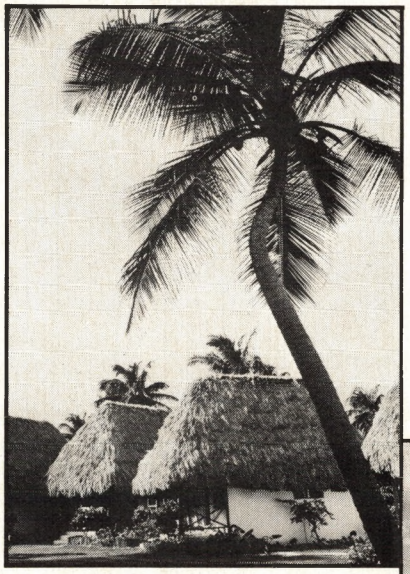
CAYE BOKEL

At Caye Bokel at the southern tip of the Turneffe Island group, the TURNEFFE DIVING LODGE has long operated as a fishing camp. Now, with the acquisition of their 38 foot custom Delta dive boat, it has become a first quality dive resort as well. The island itself is 12.4 acres with lots of sand beach, coconut palms and reef and mangrove buffer from the sea. The resort can accommodate 12 divers in double rooms with private baths. There is superior dining with adjacent bar area; 16 boats for fishing and diving; a dive shop; three compressors; a laundry (including guest laundry twice a week); and a helicopter landing site in case of emergency. The rooms are on stilts, built of native hardwoods, with ceiling fans. Underwater photos provide decoration. The water comes from rain catchment and the generators keep the electricity flowing, usually until the late evening, so the island is totally self-sufficient aside from fuel and food which are brought in several times a week from Belize City. Transportation from the mainland to Caye Bokel is generally by boat, either the *Grand Slam*, the luxuriously appointed Delta dive boat or the *Reef Raft*, a 28 foot outboard dive boat. The *Grand Slam* is powered by two caterpillar diesels and equipped with stereo, radar, VHF, a dive platform and Loran C with more than 59 dive sites already keyed in.

The Turneffe Diving Lodge (a.k.a. Turneffe Island Lodge) has been in operation since 1968, specializing in bonefishing and light tackle fishing. Since Dave and Jill Bennett acquired the resort the emphasis has included diving as well. Caye Bokel is exceptionally well situated for a dive resort since there is excellent diving within 10 minutes or less of the dock (assuming the winds aren't howling) and

STEP BACK IN DIVING TIME

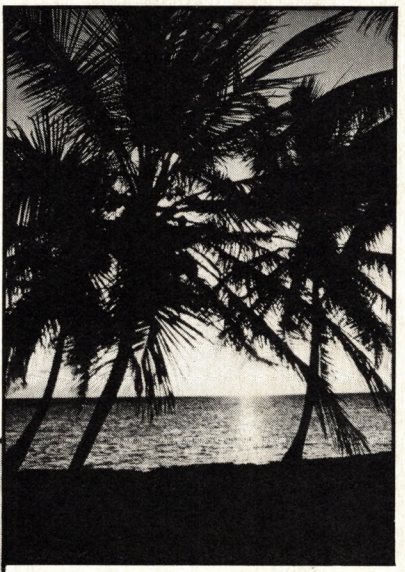
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there is an accessible lee with good shallow and medium depth reefs diveable under virtually all conditions. Lighthouse Reef is a run of one hour and 45 minutes, the northern edge of Glovers Reef is only 45 minutes away. This puts most of the best diving around Belize within the range of a day trip.

Among the fine dives we experienced while guests of the Turneffe Diving Lodge are the following: The **Wreck of the *Sayonara***—A 63 foot World War II air/sea rescue boat converted to provide passenger transit to Caye Bokel, it was a wood boat that sank at the dock at the Turneffe Diving Lodge, was refloated and sunk intentionally in 45 feet of water at the edge of the drop-off.

Majestic Reef—One of the many wall dive sites just minutes from the dock, it was memorable for the numerous stingrays sighted; the black coral trees in 50 feet of water; and the massive yellow tube sponges so prevalent throughout Belizean waters.

The Elbow—Just at the southern point of Big Caye Bokel, The Elbow was probably my most exciting Belize dive. As soon as I jumped in the water I saw a school of permit, quickly replaced by a school of horse-eye jacks. Following the jacks to the edge of the drop-off my attention was riveted on a group of six to eight eagle rays, lots of grouper, a turtle and an absolutely lush concentration of soft corals and both tube and encrusting sponges. Bokel means elbow in Dutch.

Half-Moon Caye—At the southeast corner of Lighthouse Reef, inch for inch this is one of the prettiest islands in the Caribbean. There is a lighthouse, lots of sand beach, coconut palms, tide pools, a booby bird sanctuary, shallow reef just offshore and a wall that begins at 35 feet and is very vertical. There are lots of barrel and tube sponges adorning this wall, as well as the occasional pelagic cruising by. On the shallow side of the wall are sand flats with lots of conch and we saw an octopus lair with shells piled all around like some sort of conch high-rise. I'm sure the edge of the wall would be an amazing night dive. While the *Grand Slam* could be chartered for an overnight excursion, it would take a live-aboard like the Sail Belize boats, *La Strega* or the *Isla Mia* to thoroughly explore the miles of reef in the Lighthouse area.

NOTE: The Turneffe Diving Lodge will close during the months of August, September and October, but the *Grand Slam* will be available for charter from Belize City during that period. The Turneffe Diving Lodge bears potential to become one of the very special dive destinations in the Caribbean. There are few rooms and as a consequence, the resort has a friendly, intimate feel. Jill and Dave, their nephew Beau, divemaster Charlie and the rest of the crew are accommodating and, in general, excellent hosts. By combining good service with superior diving, the Turneffe Diving Lodge will surely increase in popularity.

LIVE-ABOARD DIVE BOATS

More than most other Caribbean destinations, to see the best of Belize requires considerable cruising range. There is exciting diving at many of the small uninhabited cayes, such as English Caye and of course Lighthouse Reef and Glovers Reef are justifiably famous. SAIL BELIZE and DIVE BELIZE, the sister operations under the direction of David Gegg, provide services and transportation to the client who does not mind foregoing the comfort of a hotel for the adventure, convenience and the improved diving potential of live-aboards.

The base of operations for Sail Belize and Dive Belize is Moho Caye, a small islet just offshore Belize City offering fuel, water, boat dockage, dive gear rental, portable air compressors and provisions for the Sail Belize/Dive Belize fleet of 11 boats. The Maya Landings Marina at Moho Caye features sailboats from 31 to 52 feet; a 36 foot twin diesel dive boat equipped with a dive platform, freshwater



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rinse and accessories for day cruising; and a 28 foot sportfisherman, also equipped with a dive platform. Because so many boats are available, almost any size group can be accommodated. When several of the sailboats travel together, one of the power boats is often included to facilitate diving. The boats are available for rent with or without a local skipper or even as a crewed charter. On our Dive Belize experience we were set up on one of the 52 foot Irwin sailboats, with a knowledgeable and personable combination skipper/divemaster, a first mate and a first rate cook. Groups of four to six are the best in terms of cost efficiency. For example, with the 52 foot Irwin there are three staterooms—each with a shower and head—a galley and a main saloon equipped with satellite navigation, stereo, video cassette and other amenities. The typical dive/sail itinerary might include a cruise from Moho to English Caye where you can drop in along a mini wall plunging from 45 to 85 feet with dense coral and excellent marine life. Aside from massive hard corals and delicate gorgonians there are many individuals of several different species of grouper, spotted morays and the whole range of typical reef tropicals.

From English Caye it is a short cruise to the truly superior diving found at the Turneffe Island group, especially around **Caye Bokel** or east to **Lighthouse Reef** with its famous **Blue Hole** and the incredibly scenic **Half-Moon Caye**. A southeasterly course will put a Sail Belize charter in the **Glovers Reef** area with its miles of unexplored drop-offs and protected anchorages. The cruising potential of Belize is staggering and most of it has never been seen by man. David Gegg is a native Belizean educated in the United States. He is able to combine an astute sense of business with an unshakable pride in Belize and the belief that the rest of the world should inevitably share his rapture. From what I've seen of the world of diving, there are many elements of the Belize seascape that rank with the best.

LA STREGA (Italian for the witch) is a venerable 85 foot yacht, built for private service but now available as a live-aboard dive vessel. Built in 1955 in Scotland, *La Strega* made 32 transatlantic crossings before being moved to Belize two years ago. The vessel will accommodate 14 passengers in four staterooms, although the tour is usually limited to 12 to prevent overcrowding.

The basic cruise will depart Belize City and travel the first evening to be ready for the checkout dive at Tobacco Cay. Then the boat might head to South Water Cay on the barrier reef for a dive. There are numerous potential dive sites along the barrier reef, but generally the better diving will be along the atolls and *La Strega* will head fairly directly to either the leeside of Glovers or perhaps up to Middle Caye on the windward side. After a few days in the Glovers area the boat will likely cruise to Lighthouse Reef to explore

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St. Petersburg, FL 33733
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(813) 822-7245

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BELIZE

Half-Moon Caye, **Long Caye** and the Blue Hole.

On the return voyage, *La Strega* will usually allow some diving around the Turneffe Islands and there will be a few more dives on the barrier reef before the standard 8 day/7 night cruise ends.

The *ISLA MIA* will visit many of the same dive sites, but since she has been in operation in Belize for so long, will also have many special favorites as well. The *Isla Mia* is a recently remodeled 75 foot live-aboard dive boat and is represented by See & Sea Travel. I spoke with Carl Roessler about the *Isla Mia* and he was most enthused about the access for unlimited diving in the dramatic areas of Lighthouse Reef, which lie as much as 60 miles off the coast of Belize. The competent and friendly crew are another asset, particularly after seven days at sea. Accommodations aboard the *Isla Mia* include five private double cabins and one six passenger cabin with a spacious main saloon, three electric heads and freshwater showers.

BELIZE TOPSIDE

While the diving is what brought us back to Belize, during this trip we were also able to explore some of the country's interior. We traveled by boat to Placentia, a charming fishing village of 350 people set on a point between a huge shallow lagoon and a mangrove cay. There is a sidewalk that begins at the pier and goes about a mile north and is quite scenic. We stayed at Rum Point, a small resort on the beach with five freeform ferrocement bungalows trimmed with mahogany and other Belizean hardwoods. While there is good snorkeling just offshore, the barrier reef is 18-20 miles distant and the boats are 25 foot skiffs powered by 30 horsepower outboards. Placentia is not a viable diving destination, but it is an excellent place to just relax in scenic surroundings or prepare for a trip to the interior.

Belize is extremely rich in archaeology and Mayan artifacts and there are several rather extensive ruins. Altun Ha is about 28 miles north of Belize City and features the remains of what was a great city of the Mayan culture, probably first settled more than 2,000 years ago. Today there are great mounds covered by vines and trees and excavations that have been partially restored. There are Mayan pyramids and the remains of temples, a large reservoir and tombs.

The site of Xunantunich (Maiden of the Rock) is a Mayan ruin and the largest archaeological site in the Belize River Valley. The indications are that Xunantunich was occupied until about 850 A.D. It was excavated around 1938. The most promi-

nent structure is El Castillo, a massive 130 foot tall pyramid. The villages of Benque Viejo and San Ignacio are within the immediate area and we found comfortable accommodations at the Hotel San Ignacio. Another interesting option is the CHAA CREEK COTTAGES, a rural and rustic group of cottages nestled on the bank of the Macal River just a few miles upstream San Ignacio. In a lush, forested setting with cattle grazing nearby, these palm thatched units are a far cry from the Grand Hyatt, but are a quaint base for tubing down the river, bird-watching, exploring the Rio Frio Cave or the ruins.

The Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve is another scenic wonder of Belize. The heavily timbered west slopes of the Maya Mountains are rich with beautiful streams rushing over granite boulders and falling in cascades, eventually to join the Belize River. There is a set of waterfalls plunging over 1,000 feet and the Rio On site with a lovely series of pools and short stretches of rapids. Camping within the forest preserve is prohibited but there are accommodations available at the Blancaneaux Lodge, about 15 miles into the reserve.

Belize offers tremendous vacation diversity, excellent water sports and miles of unexplored coral reef. The business community and government are very anxious to have tourists visit their country once, for given the initial exposure, they surely will return.

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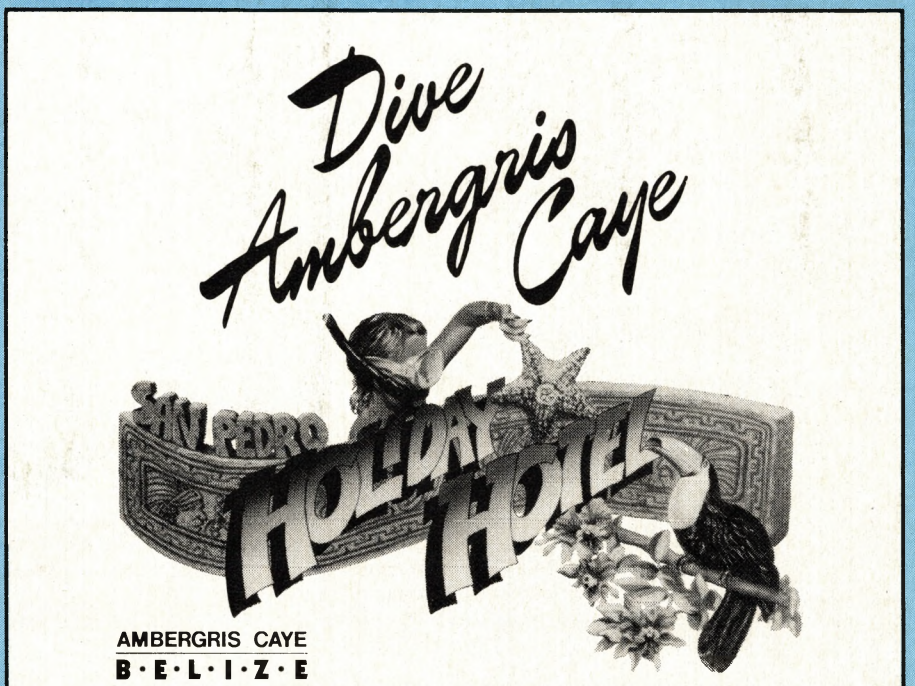
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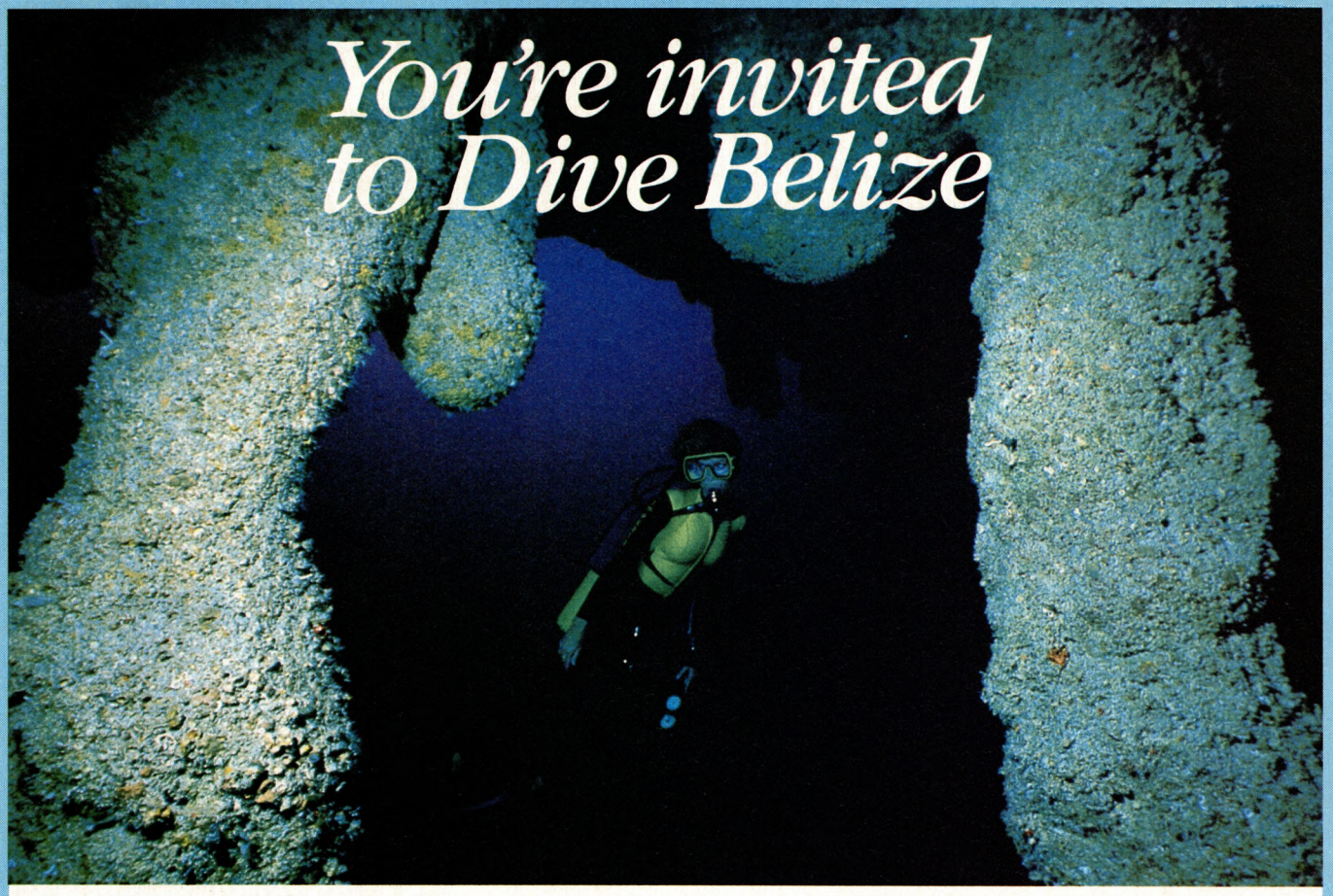
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Unique to the Caribbean also is mainland Belize, where lush pine forests, cascading waterfalls and a network of limestone caves are the order of the day. As the home of the ancient Mayas, Belize is also the scene of numerous pyramids and Mayan ruins which bear testimony to the early inhabitants to this land.

The most precious feature of Belize is our warm and friendly people. Our roots are implanted in every corner of the world and have harmoniously evolved to form this truly unique part of history.

With great pleasure I take this opportunity to invite you on behalf of our Government and people to our shores.

Sincerely yours,

Hon. Dereck Aikman, B.A.,M.A.
Minister of Tourism



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SDM travel SECTION





CAP'N DON'S HABITAT On Beautiful Bonaire

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARBARA A. CURRIE

Not even my good friend and sporadic dive buddy Tim O'Keefe had been able to prepare me for my first visit to Habitat. For seven years I'd listened to Tim recall, in reverent tones, his decade of adventures in that Eden by the sea on Bonaire. But it was his obvious affection and admiration for a legendary character named Cap'n Don Stewart that spawned devotion not only to Bonaire, Tim admitted, but also to the sea itself.

"Habitat is not a hotel. It's not really a resort. It's a philosophy and a lifestyle for those whose souls belong to the sea. You have to experience it to understand," he told me many times.

Tim, a sensible and sensitive man who shared my love/hate relationship with both structured writing and regimented diving, was no unglued middle-aged professional in search of an aquatic guru. His verbalized vignettes of diving with Cap'n Don and happier days at Habitat always made me a little envious. Like all writers, I thrive on good stories and it seemed that Habitat was a "10" on that scale.

Convinced that Habitat was hiding an unusual diving experience that would continue to elude me if I didn't pack and book a two and one-half hour ALM flight from Miami soon, I set aside five days in early March.

Habitat was the most unusual dive resort I'd ever seen. Everyone I met seemed to have perfected the art of congenial informality—as if they had finally come home and all newcomers wandering around looking curious were potential family.

The Habitat plant matched my definition of raw beauty. Cap'n Don has preserved the natural Bonaire environment surrounding the nine whitewashed cottages; four single and six double economy rooms, affectionately referred to as "the monks' quarters." Tall finger cacti, prickly pear cacti, sea grape, coconut palms, aloe, bougainvillea, cordia and other indigenous flora thrive on this site. At least a dozen colorful species of birds darted back and forth among the trees and I finally saw several of the large blue lizards found only on Bonaire. This wasn't a resort—it was a refuge.

The cozy one and two bedroom cottages, with kitchenettes, resemble older Bonairean structures with red-tiled roofs and louvered windows. All are only a 60 second walk from the dive shop, which sits on the bluff overlooking the Caribbean and Klein Bonaire. The main building now includes the office and reception area, including Cap'n Don's computer center; open air Quarter Deck Restaurant and Captain's Bar. To the right, overlooking the dock and dive shop is a small sand beach.

The dive shop is the only one of its kind in the Caribbean: It's open 24 hours a day. The slogan of this diving experience is "diving freedom," and that's no come-on. Divers can take their tanks and gear and go shore diving on the protected reefs off Habitat any time of day or night. The shop itself is a new, open-air facility consisting of a classroom, photo lab, equipment repair facility, compressor room and spacious patio area.

Dave Serlin, the only PADI master scuba instructor in the Netherlands Antilles, oversees the dive shop operation. Like the rest of the expatriate staff, Dave has been at Habitat for four years and hopes to stay indefinitely.

The dive facilities at Habitat are not pretentious and regimented—divers are assigned a tank number, but that's as far as the discipline routine goes. Other than the obvious conscientious reminders to divers to take the sport seriously and follow safety rules and procedures, the staff is there to assist and advise, but not to police and dictate dive plans. Those who want to go on scheduled boat dives in the morning and afternoon are urged to reserve space early, by putting their tank number on the sign-up boards for one of the four boats in the fleet, because

(Continued on Page 98)

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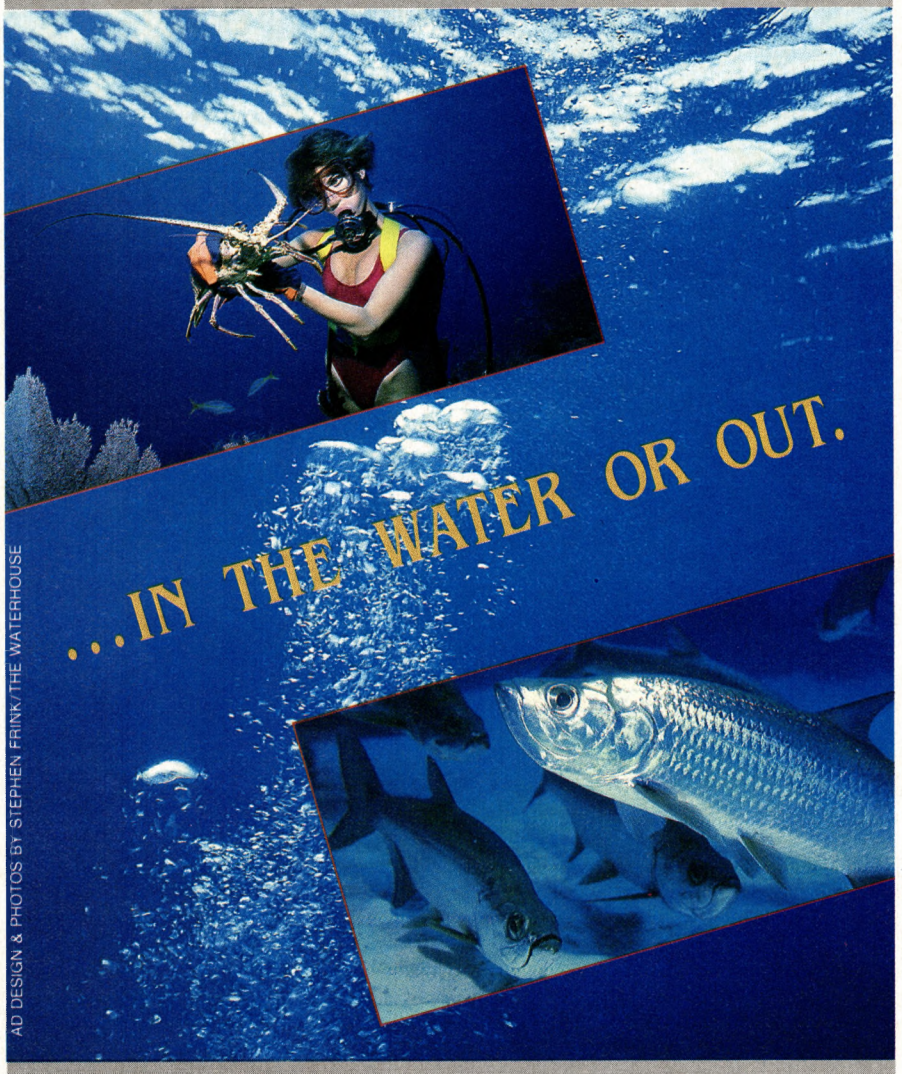
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HABITAT

(Continued from Page 95)

boats are limited to only 12 divers to prevent crowding.

I didn't realize this before I arrived: Habitat is the only PADI Five Star Training Facility, not only in Bonaire, but in the entire southern Caribbean. There are almost 20 courses available—in five languages: English, Spanish, German, Dutch and Papamiento. They range from resort and scuba review through full certification. This includes the Habitat gold certification course that spans 12 days and 18 dives. It is the most comprehensive and personalized course available anywhere. Advanced courses include everything from rescue diver to equipment specialist and assistant instructor (on request).

One of the finest reefs off Bonaire, as well as a superb coral drop-off, lies just 100 yards off the Habitat dock. Out in that area is a special option exclusive to Habitat, Dee Scarr's Touch the Sea program. Dee is an author, underwater photographer and aquatic soulmate of a variety of sea creatures. She has tamed many reef inhabitants and will take divers on a special Touch the Sea three dive package to experience this unusual communion with her freeswimming zoo. She presents weekly slide shows on this subject at Habitat every Monday at 9:00 pm.

Cap'n Don could be the subject of an entire article himself. Born in California, his lifestyle has rivaled that of the actor he resembles, Errol Flynn. His love affair with Bonaire began in 1962 when he dropped the anchor of his schooner *Valerie Queen* in Kralendijk Harbor, en route to Antigua. He never left.

That year he established his first dive operation on Bonaire and a year later, its first hotel, the Flamingo Beach, on the site once occupied by a German detention camp. In 1972, he helped reopen the defunct Hotel Bonaire and founded Aquaventure, the island's first full service dive operation.

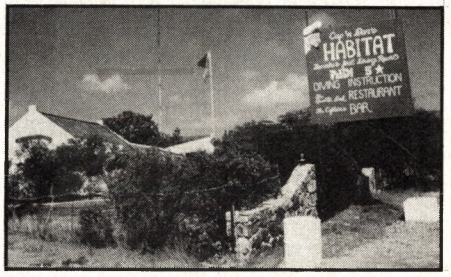
Habitat, which he described as "an age old concept just waiting for a place to happen, a totally ocean oriented resort," was founded in 1976.

But it is his role as a crusader for marine conservation that has won Cap'n Don a coterie of followers and the recognition of the dive industry not only on Bonaire, but also throughout the Caribbean and North America. He worked closely with the Bonaire government to establish the Bonaire Marine Park and enforce laws prohibiting spearfishing or collecting of any marine creatures in Bonaire's waters. He also established a network of permanent moorings on regularly visited dive sites to prevent destruction by anchors. And, in 1984 his pet project of the 1970s, the organization for Caribbean Underwater Resort Owners (CURO) was

incorporated into the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA), a move praised as a step toward uniting Caribbean countries in awareness of marine conservation.

"I've always felt that 'sport diver' should involve more than just using the sea as a playground for amusement. That's only part of it. From hobbyists, we become professionals. Let's give divers an identity—let's educate them as to who they are and what their responsibilities are in preserving and protecting the earth's last frontier," Cap'n Don said.

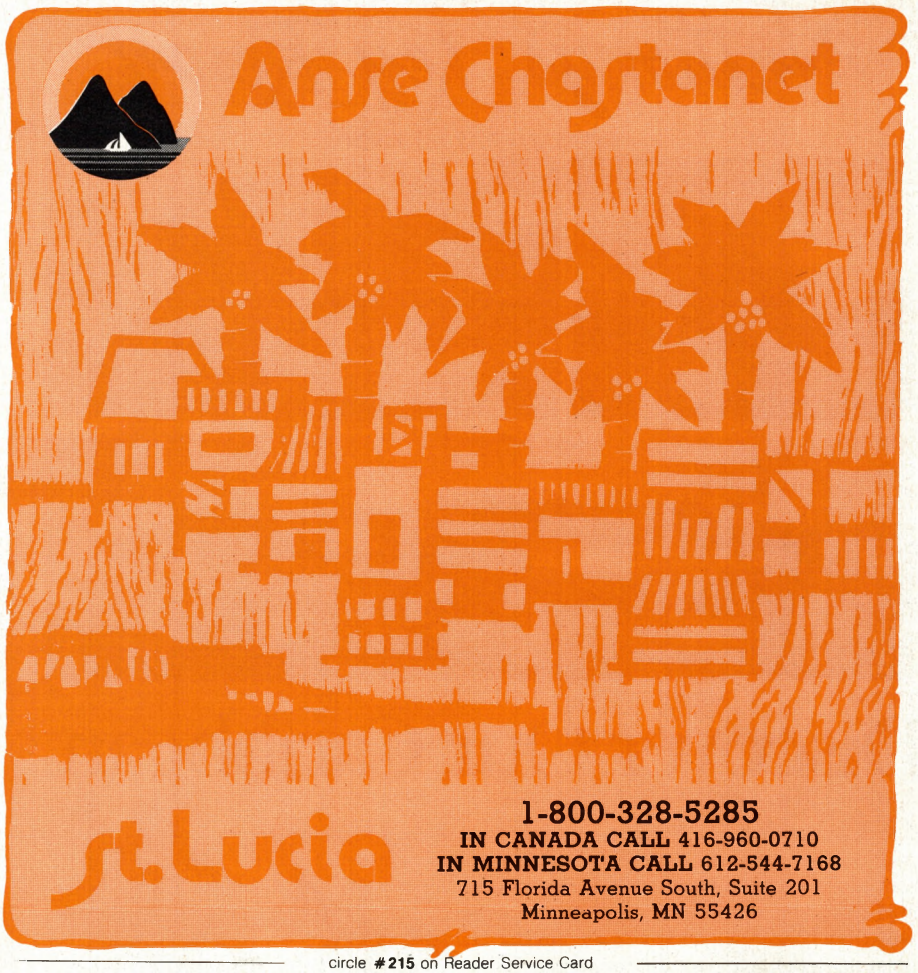
"We're expanding Habitat as a community dedicated not only to awareness of the sea environment, but also to man's interaction with the land here. We've developed a comprehensive program of activities for guests—that's Morey Ruza's pet project. He can arrange nature hikes, birdwatching sessions, spelunking, horseback tours, rock climbing and deep sea fishing—name your interest and he can arrange it," Cap'n Don added.





Morey and his wife Linda came to Bonaire 13 years ago and were regular visitors for nine years before settling as staff at Habitat in 1981. Once a workaholic in New York's garment manufacturing business, Morey is now part of the fabric of the Habitat community and a dedicated defender and promoter of its concept. Linda contributes her talents as helpmate—and is currently at work creating the first bagel bakery on Bonaire. Natural bagels are now part of the regular menu at the Quarter Deck.

Don and Morey brought out a set of blueprints for Cap'n Don's most ambitious landlocked undertaking so far, a four and one-half acre island community called the Hamlet, consisting of 29 villas set in landscaped gardens. They will overlook the Caribbean and a strip of sand beach bordering a small lagoon



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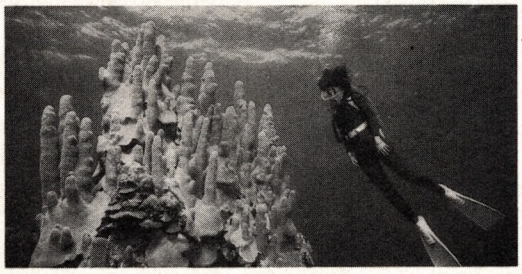
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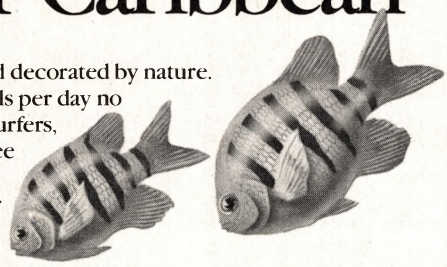






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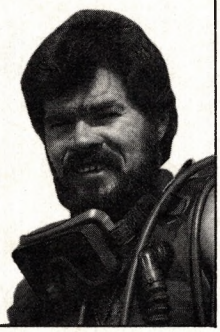
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with excellent snorkeling just beyond. The site adjoins Habitat and the first two bedroom villa is expected to be completed by the end of summer.

One of Cap'n Don's offshore projects is Memorial Reef, 200 feet off Habitat, a 40 foot site of virgin reef which has been



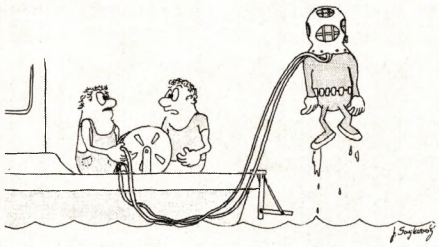
earmarked as a tribute to past pioneers of the oceans. Cap'n Don's plan was to place a flagstaff on the site, embedded in the reef and ensure that a divers down flag marked the location year-round—to identify "the last frontier, a gesture offered to those who have gone before us, the pioneers of earth's last frontier, like Philippe Cousteau."

Another discovery was the conch mariculture research underway next to Habitat. (The site was donated by Cap'n Don.) This research is supervised by a young marine biologist, Robbie Henson.

Because of the residual effects of a tenacious Floridian virus, I wasn't able to log as much bottom time as I would have liked, but that allowed me more hours to absorb the special ambience of Habitat and spend more time becoming acquainted with its creator. Another discovery: Cap'n Don Stewart is a first rate writer. He shared some of his manuscripts with me. They are irreverant, earthy and descriptive seafaring adventures.

There are a variety of definitions of "habitat" in Webster's, but I like this one best: "the place or type of site where a plant or animal naturally lives and grows." Especially in terms of awareness of the earth's last frontier, Habitat fits that description for those sensitive enough to appreciate this unusual community by, and of, the sea.

For information and reservations contact Habitat U.S.A., P.O. Box 237, Waitsfield, Vermont 05673; (802) 496-5067.



"How much helium is in that mixture?"

DIVE BOAT ETIQUETTE



TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY DARREN R. DOUGLASS

There is a surge of newly certified divers into diving in Southern California. More of these divers are visiting the offshore areas, exploring the reefs, kelp and currents of the coastal islands.

With this new generation of sea-going explorers comes the need for increased knowledge. This lies mainly in the area of boat diving technique and etiquette, in these categories: on-boat equipment handling; boat diving entries and exits; neutralizing potential problems; and interaction with fellow shipmates. With a greater understanding of the challenges presented by Southern California boat diving, new and not so new divers can benefit from increased safety and successful experiences.

EQUIPMENT HANDLING

It is essential that all divers be aware of the dos and don'ts of proper gear handling aboard a charter dive boat. Nothing will get the goat of captain or crew more than the wrong piece of equipment in the wrong place. Space is limited. On the boats the rule is "a place for everything and everything in its place."

Tanks, backpacks, regulators and weightbelts can usually be readied for use, then parked in tank storage areas. This allows divers to quickly and easily don their equipment when the boat arrives at the dive site. Weightbelts and tanks do not belong in the galley or bunkroom areas. Also, a carelessly handled weightbelt or tank can damage deck surfaces, as well as try the patience of the boat's captain.

Be sure you stow your gear bag in the designated area (rules vary from boat to boat, so ask if you are not sure). Make certain your equipment is stowed in it promptly after every dive. This will ensure that deck space is not a clutter of masks,



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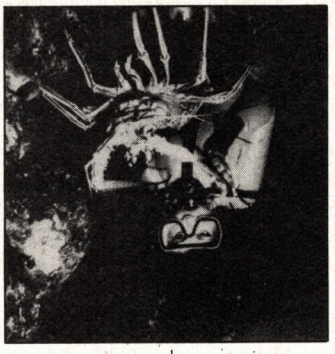
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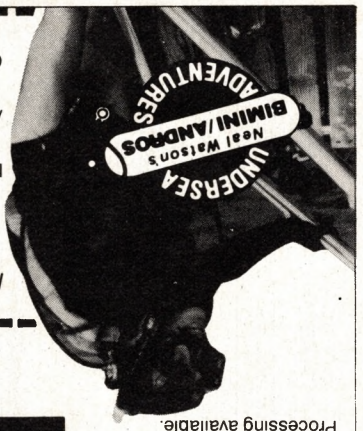
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DIVE BOAT ETIQUETTE

fins, snorkles and gloves. It will also make sure that you do not lose any of your equipment.

Stow your personal belongings (towels,. clothes, etc.) in your bunk. A small duffle or day pack works well for this purpose. If you need something out of the bunkroom area, don't go into it dripping wet; ask a crew member or a dry diver to fetch your item for you. This keeps the bunkroom clean and dry.

ENTRIES AND EXITS

When entering the water from a dive boat be aware of three things: equipment, water conditions and boat position.

Personal gear needs to be in place and totally operational. This will help avoid false starts. It is no fun to get stuck at the entry gate behind another diver who stops and tries to make equipment adjustments before jumping in.

Put on your fins last, just as you are ready to splash in. Never walk around the deck of a boat wearing fins. A fall could cause injury to yourself and others.

When you jump in, hold your mask and weightbelt firmly. Invariably these are the items that fall off the easiest and become lost when not secured. Hold tightly onto your regulator also. Keep it either in your mouth or tucked under your arm. This enables you to find it easily once you are in the water.

Check the water conditions before making your entry. Avoid surface entanglement by making sure the area is clear of kelp. Note current and wind effects as they can hamper a surface swim to the anchorline before descent.

Be aware of how the boat hangs on the anchorline as well. Know if the ship is stationary or if it is swinging back and forth. If the boat is swinging on a wide arc, jump in as it swings out on its fullest pitch, once in the water move quickly away from the boat. It is important to enter the water with your regulator in your mouth during these conditions. Should the dive boat begin to move rapidly toward your face you can easily and quickly deflate your BC and escape beneath the hull.

NEUTRALIZING POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

Many offshore areas in Southern California are prone to swift currents. With proper technique and planning, current diving can be as successful and as fun as any other type of diving. However, being caught down current can be a potential hazard as well as an embarrassment.

Always plan to begin dives against the current. Maintain an up-current compass heading. Use kelp blades as weather-

vanes. Crawl along the bottom if necessary, but stay up current.

Some of California's best offshore diving is done in thick, sunlit kelp beds. Kelp should not be a hazard to divers. Entanglement is not a problem, but reaction to it can be. Remember that diving in kelp requires slow, relaxed movements. It is always better for a diver to swim underneath the kelp canopy than to crawl on top of it. Always leave an extra margin of air (more than normal) in reserve to swim back to the boat on the bottom. If you ever do become snarled in a kelp bed, relax. Slowly untangle, cut or bite your way loose. Then deflate your BC and drop underneath it. Kelp is not attacked trained: It does not seek out victims! Just watch where you are going. If you ever do get a little kelp wrapped around your fin strap, slowly untangle yourself. Never respond rapidly or jerkily.

Because West Coast dive boats seek to give everyone their money's worth, it is possible for a diver to make many dives in one day. Care must be taken with the dive tables to avoid decompression problems. Make certain you plan your depth, time and air supply for each dive, then follow your plan.

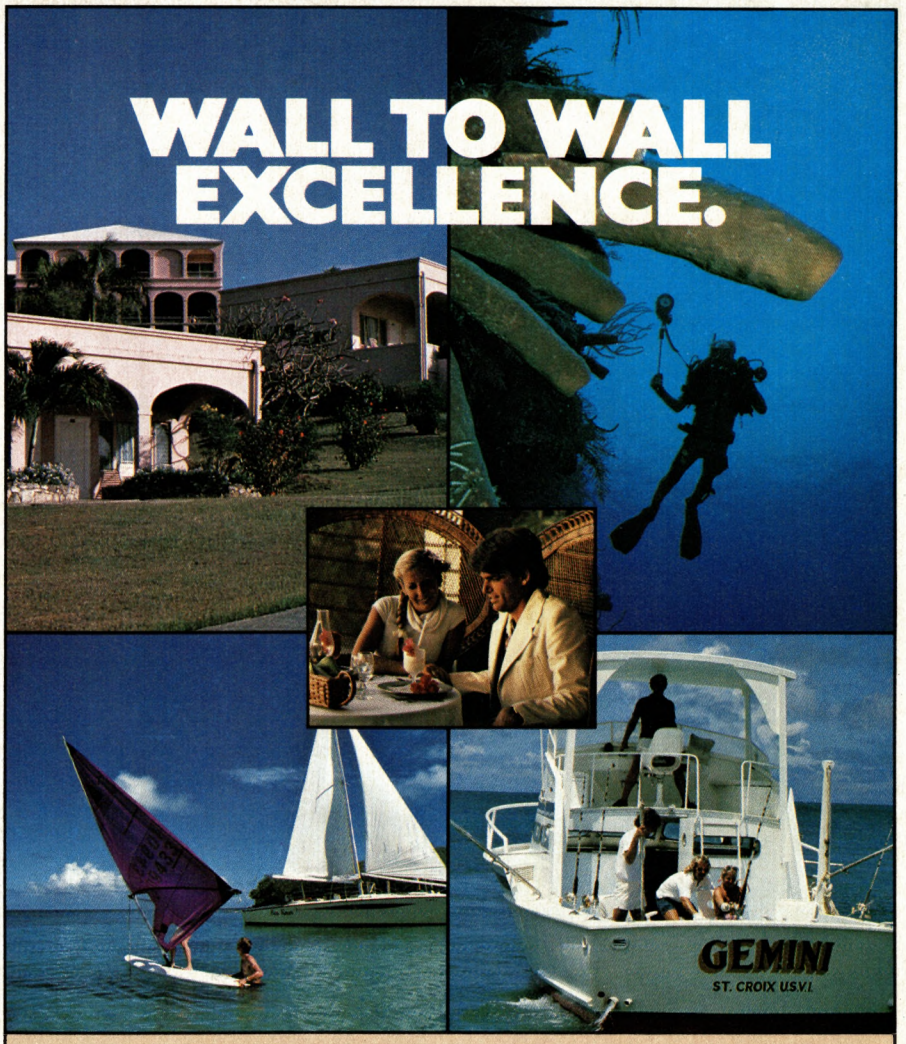
Mal de mer, fish feeding and sea lion calling are all different names for that universal sailor's malady—seasickness. This is never fun. Avoid it by taking preventive medication. If taken one half hour before the boat departs, most preventives work pretty well. Ask your doctor about which one will work the best for you. Be sure he knows that you will be using it while diving (some remedies have side effects). If worse comes to worst and you do get seasick on a dive boat, get yourself topside. Fresh air will always help. If nothing does help and you do vomit, be sure to use the leeward railing (that's the downwind side of the boat). Never get sick in the head as the effects of such a manuever are unpleasant for all other passengers as well.

INTERACTION WITH SHIPMATES

Generally, good boat diving etiquette involves basic common sense and mutual respect for all aboard.

Boats are small floating structures on which the inhabitants are constantly struggling for space (eating space, sitting space, working space, sleeping space, etc.). Be mindful of how you handle your own space as well as others. If you spread all of your photo gear on every table in the galley, it will be difficult for others to eat. If you leave all of your equipment strewn over the deck after a dive, people will trip and stumble over it. If you persist in the above practices, you will become unpopular with divers and crew—especially on a multi-day trip. Be polite, magnanimous, humble, flexible. Then everyone can enjoy the dive.

With a little forethought and planning, positive boat diving experiences are ours to enjoy. Let's go diving!



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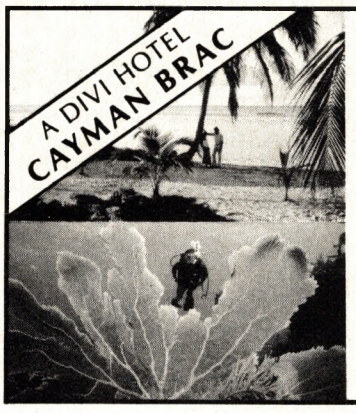
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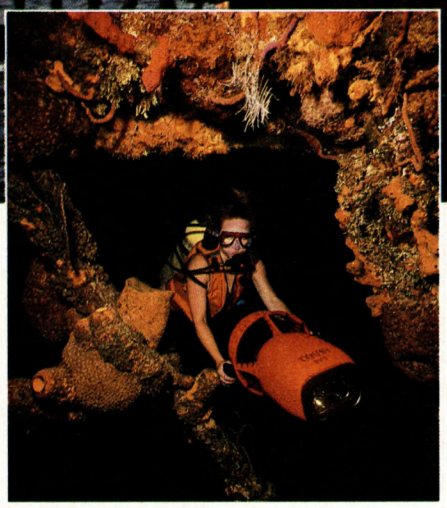
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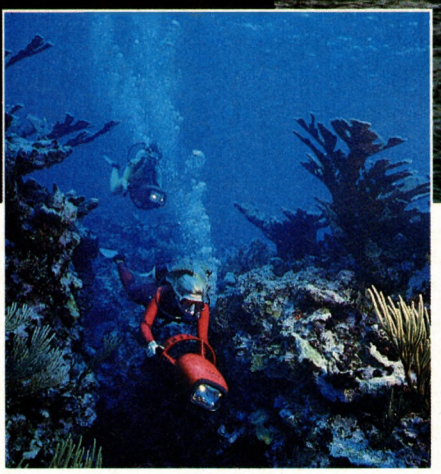
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***Balboa*—West**

Hepp's Pipeline—North



Ironshore Gardens—South

Of all the islands in the Caribbean (there are more than 1,000), none is more singularly popular among scuba divers than Grand Cayman. Travel writers in SKIN DIVER and other publications have proclaimed it "the pinnacle of diving adventure" and "the Scuba Bowl of the Caribbean," attesting to the quality of the Cayman diving experience.

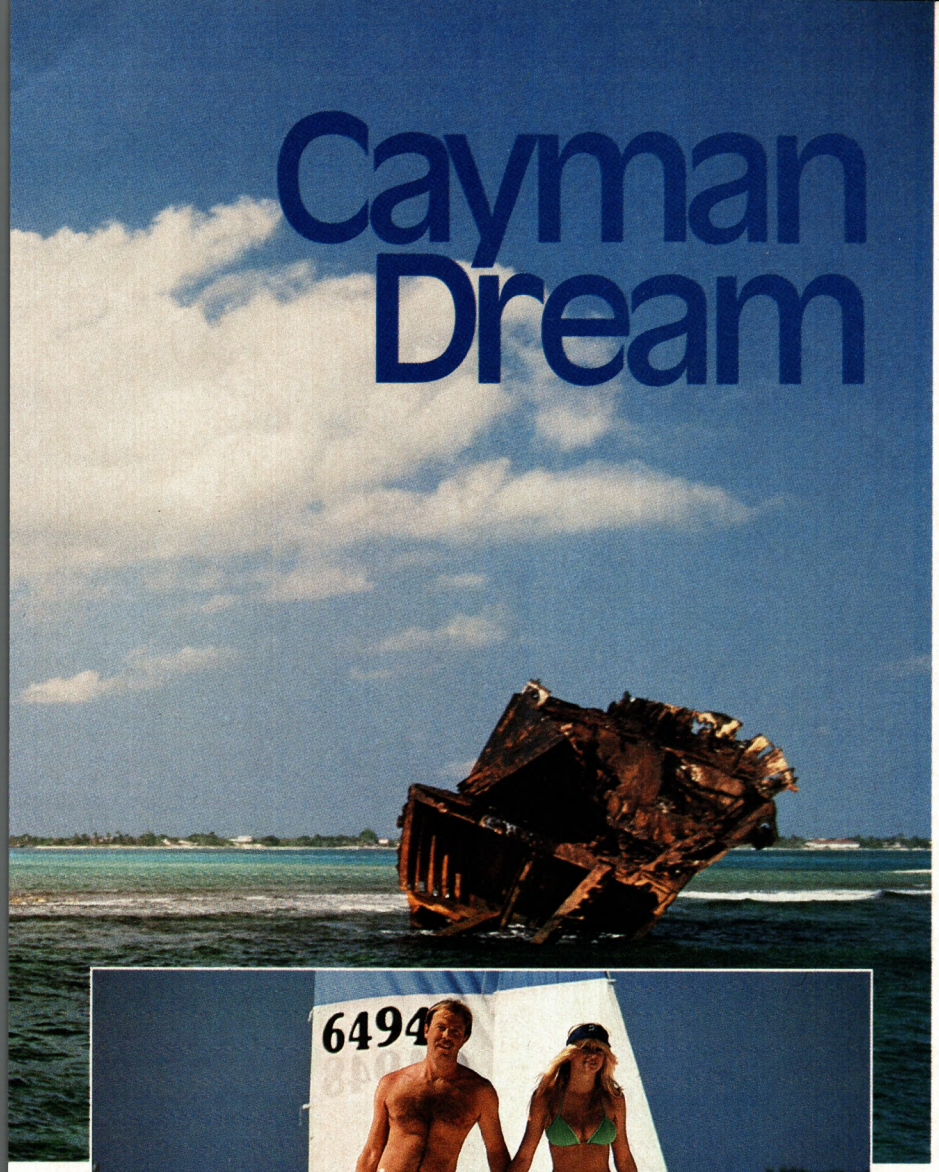
This is all for good reasons: inexpensive air fares, a pleasant, stable, English speaking population and one of the best underwater environments in the world. No wonder nearly half of the 125,000 annual air arrivals come here to dive.

The Cayman Dream is real, not fantasy and is made up of a smorgasbord of underwater delights highlighted by massive, well formed reefs, an exciting array of marine life, an assortment of shipwrecks and a stunning selection of vertical walls—all visible in a nearly transparent sea.

Since 1969, I've been coming here, watching Grand Cayman grow from a sleepy island of farmers, fishermen and seafarers into a banking and investment center and a major tourist destination—the mecca for the Caribbean diver. In 1970, I wrote my first magazine story on Grand Cayman, and in '71 and '72 I made more than 100 dives along the Cayman wall—dives that I still recall as magical and mystical.

You never forget your first wall dive. And, you won't find any more spectacular than those in Grand Cayman. With childlike wonder you gaze at a vivid, dramatic escarpment that plunges to undivable depths, the sheer sides of an underwater mountain. Hanging momentarily suspended, you hear exhalations plinking like an electric piano and watch exhaust bubbles rising through varying intensities of blue toward a sunburst above. Along the drop-off, huge head corals and layered

Cayman Dream





Seven Mile Beach—West

Top: *Ridgewood*—East

The Four Faces Of Grand Cayman

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK FREHSEE



Cayman Airways 727

starlet and lettuce coral cascade down umbrella-shaped slopes.

Under ledges and in deep coral grooves, sponges are king. Forget pastels, when hit with a diver's light or photographer's strobe, Cayman's drop-offs burst with a dizzy display of intense colors: blood red finger and rope sponges; bright green, royal purple and golden yellow tube and stovepipe sponges; azure vase sponges; and bright orange elephant ear sponges. All are entwined in a spider web of black corals, lacy bryozoans, deepwater gorgonians and spiraled wire corals. Part of you wants to be analytical but the richness of the scene, heightened by a little narcosis, works on your mind and you are transported to a brainstorm of sensations. If color doesn't get you, shape will; if not shape, size: It is a visual feast for eyes used to blue skies and green grass.

The list of diving dignitaries who visit Grand Cayman is impressive. Giddings, Tzimoulis, Waterman, McKenney, Nicklin, Doubilet and all the others have come here to film and photograph and undoubtedly will return again. I have shot catalogs, posters, advertising campaigns and magazine stories here, averaging three to four trips a year. We come to shoot because of the dependability. Veteran photographers know that if there is a strong wind blowing, you can always find a leeside and seldom does the visibility drop below 100 feet. I can count on the fingers of one hand the places in the Caribbean where I've seen an honest 200 feet of horizontal visibility and Grand Cayman is one of them.

The West End of the island is where 5,000 Caymanians live (one-third of the population) centered around George Town, the capital. Hogsty Bay and West Bay scallop into the island; the former molds George Town Harbour, the latter forms Seven Mile Beach, a beautiful stretch of creamy white sand where a concentration of hotels and dive operations is found. Just offshore is the wreck of the *Oro Verde*, a large, intact freighter that looks like and often is, the backdrop for a Hollywood movie. A little farther offshore and to the north is a string of dramatic wall dives just a hair less spectacular than the best Northshore wall diving. Back in George Town Harbour the smaller, but interesting wrecks of the *Cali* and the *Balboa* are found. Night divers on the *Balboa* will find the beautiful but rare orange ball anemone, in full display, residing in crevices and beneath metal plates. I know where there are a half dozen, chances are your dive guide will know of more. South of George Town Harbour are a couple of laid back dive resorts, complete with beach diving and individual attractions including an underwater petting zoo.

(Continued on Page 110)



DIVERS UNLIMITED

VACATION DIVING IN FLORIDA'S FUN CITY

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE LUCAS

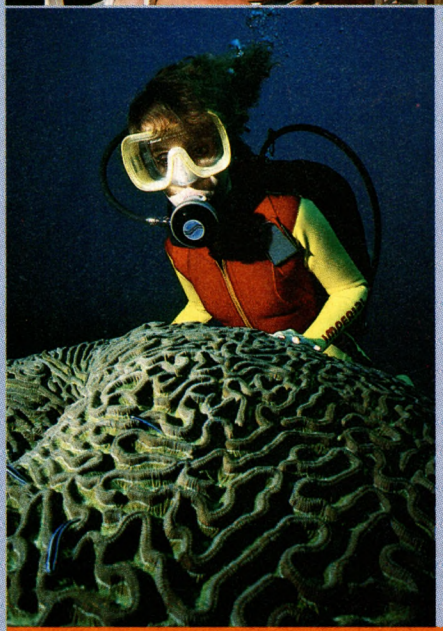
Fun, that's what Fort Lauderdale is—good old family fun. You can't help feeling terrific in a city with year-round beach-going weather and clear water lapping its shores. One where the semi-tropics allow tall coconut palms to spread their fronds above your head, tiny multi-colored sailboats skitter over the waves to play tag with windsailers, multi-million dollar yachts decorate the waterways, banner trailing airplanes advertise non-stop parties and top quality dive boats run every day to some of the most accessible diving on Florida's west coast.

Fort Lauderdale's dive resort operations are among the best run in the tropics. One of the largest, Divers Unlimited, keeps three custom dive boats docked just behind its beachfront Lauderdale Surf/Days Inn Hotel base of operation. Recognized across the country as a leader in diver training programs, DU's nearby Hollywood retail operation is the largest dive store in the United States. The Lauderdale beach resort serves vacationing and weekend divers and is used extensively as a part of DU's top quality basic and advanced diver training programs. Through these courses you can come on board as a newly certified diver and in time progress through advanced, specialty and instructor ratings.

Every time I drop over the transom of the 40 feet *Diversion* or *Dolphin One* or smaller sister *Dolphin Two*, I am amazed at the variety and abundance of marine life so close to shore. Although exposed to a sometimes fickle sea, Lauderdale's waters are often calm and very clear.

As we anchored recently on one of the many long reefs north of Port Everglades







Top: Divers Unlimited's vessels *Dolphin Two*, *Diversion* and *Dolphin One* carry divers to the exciting reef systems off Ft. Lauderdale. Middle: Coconuts restaurant, next to the DU dock, features live entertainment on weekends and good food anytime. Above left: Janice Lucas examines a massive brain coral at Barracuda Reef. Above right: Dave Stancil answers questions in the Days Inn resort dive store.

inlet, everyone aboard was delighted to immediately see the reef 60 feet below. As if sitting in a glassbottomed boat, we could easily spot schools of fish moving over the colorful break. The sparkle of the crystal surfaced Gulf Stream had again forced itself all the way to shore.

Three distinct reef systems run almost non-stop up Lauderdale beach. Divers Unlimited's captains know many of the best spots well. Some of the favorites are as shallow as ten feet and make excellent places for the family to try out a mask and snorkel or brush up on scuba skills before venturing deeper. South of the inlet some manmade reefs have been built to attract tropical fish. At one, monstrous, criss-crossed concrete jacks sit on three of their six pegs looking like lost toys for a jovial giant. Thousands of small reef fish play beneath them and on the adjacent corals.

Farther out, the ocean floor breaks in 15-30 feet, ideal depths for exploring. On the beach side, the bottom drops away rapidly to expose walls two to five feet high. Most are topped with delicate branching corals. On Barracuda Reef, south of the inlet, massive hard corals populate the seafloor in very shallow water. At places on its face, big brain corals are bordered by feathery spires of semi-rare pillar coral.

The semi-shallow reef tops are decorated with fragile staghorn corals and bright green, gold and red whip sponges. Along their perimeters, blood red sponges alternate with more delicately colored pink vase sponges. In the holes that pock the entire area, delicious spiny lobsters hide just out of reach. Some share their homes with small spotted moray eels or sea urchins.

The deep reefs begin in 60-100 feet and have thick stands of deepwater gorgonians firmly fastened to the coraline rock. Silvery spadefish run in organized groups, while fast moving jacks appear out of the blue haze to quickly inspect you and disappear again.

Scattered along these deeper breaks are the remains of several shipwrecks. An old houseboat, several barges and other derelicts provide cover for hundreds of large barracuda and thousands of colorful fish. A large, new wreck will have joined this collection by the time you receive this issue: Mollie's Wreck, the now infamous freighter *Mercedes*. It has been shown repeatedly on network television news programs since Thanksgiving Day, 1984, when it went up against a Palm Beach mansion's seawall during a storm and almost became a permanent landmark (see this month's Wreck Facts). After refusing to be refloated for more than three months, the nearly 200 foot long hulk is scheduled for deliberate sinking in 80-100 feet near a popular Lauderdale reef. A move is also underway by some local divers to have it renamed the

(Continued on Page 116)

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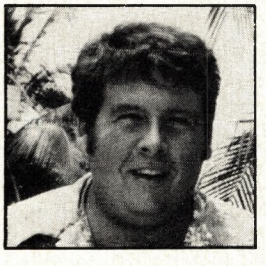
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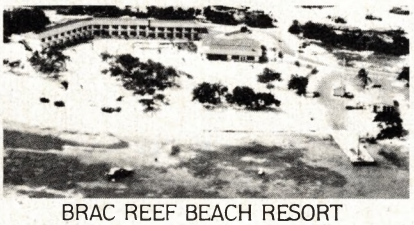
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CAYMAN DREAM

(Continued from Page 105)

Northshore diving presents many examples of the finest wall diving in the Caribbean. Dropping down these fantastic canyons, walls and pinnacles will produce many versions of the giddy sensations I first experienced here. Only Cozumel's Palancar Reef has larger head corals along the drop-off; nowhere are the black corals, blazing colors or bizarre formations more amazing. Northshore also features the famous Tarpon Alley at the main channel entrance to North Sound. This is one of the few places in the world you can see and photograph the silvery flashes of more than 100 schooling tarpon close-up in clear water. A short distance away is the Valley of the Rays, where huge Southern stingrays slumber on a carpet of white sand.

East End and Southshore are the least traveled areas of Grand Cayman with many places virtually unexplored. True virgin areas still exist all around the island but the eastern and southern shorelines are more virgin than known. Great wall diving is found here, perhaps a little deeper than north or west, with the best spot really being a matter of opinion. The southern reefs excel in delicate growths of shallow corals and acres of golden elkhorn. Squadrons of eagle rays often visit the handful of divers who sample Southshore diving.

There are more than 300 documented shipwrecks around Grand Cayman but most are inconspicuous and badly broken or buried in heavy growth. Around the horseshoe shaped fringing reef offshore the East End are the greatest number of visible wrecks with several worth a special effort to visit. In addition to more fantastic wall sites, the southeast coast features a stretch of mid-reef formations undercut and riddled with an unbelievable series of caves and caverns, some large enough to drive a truck through.

The four sides of Cayman offer a selection of sites and a variety of experiences complemented by a professional group of divemasters and dive operators. And, when the diving is over, there is plenty to do topside, starting with shopping in George Town, tasty island and continental cuisine, fun-filled happy hours, dancing and nightlife. Nighttime the island jumps but it turns off at midnight or 1:00 am, inviting a peaceful night's sleep and an anticipation of more diving adventure.

Sightseeing Grand Cayman by car can be a wonderful experience. I have the most fun during my off-diving hours simply driving around and talking with Caymanian people, some of the wittiest, warmest and most charming people you will ever find. Among Cayman islanders, ethnic plurality abounds, resulting in little or no racial tensions. Caymanians experi-

ence little unemployment and the highest per capita income in the Caribbean; major crimes are much less common than in the States.

It is pleasing to note that while the number of divers has increased one hundredfold, no major changes have occurred in the quality of the general marine environment. Grand Cayman is the top of an underwater mountain range and is bathed constantly by the pure deep purple of the open Caribbean; its shoreline has remained mostly pristine. Progress has brought some commercialism and this does not always result in the most eye-pleasing solutions to problems. But at least the Cayman Islands government has had the good sense and foresight to limit the height of the hotels and condos to "nothing higher than a palm tree" and to restrict the removal of black coral and

(Continued on Page 116)

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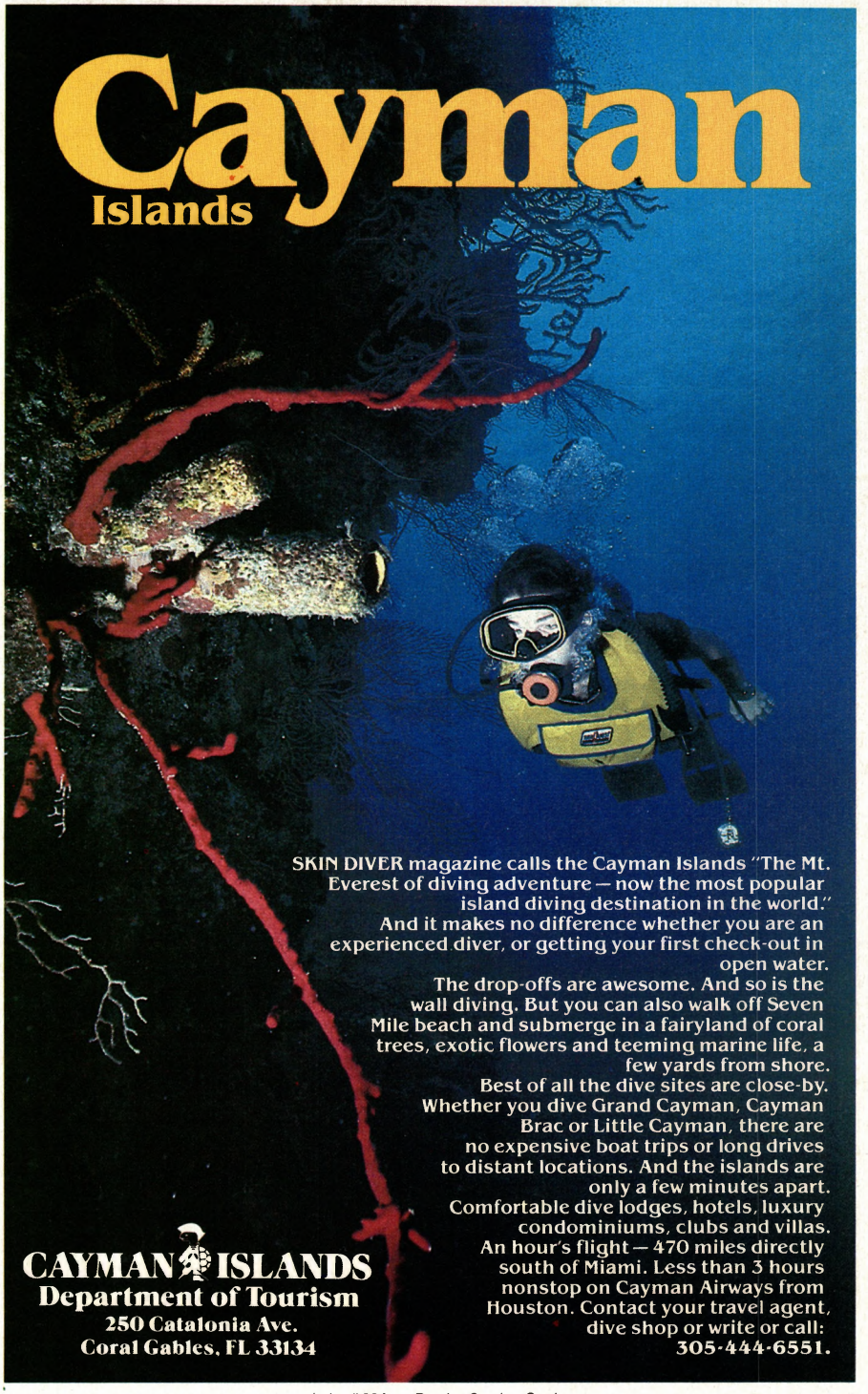
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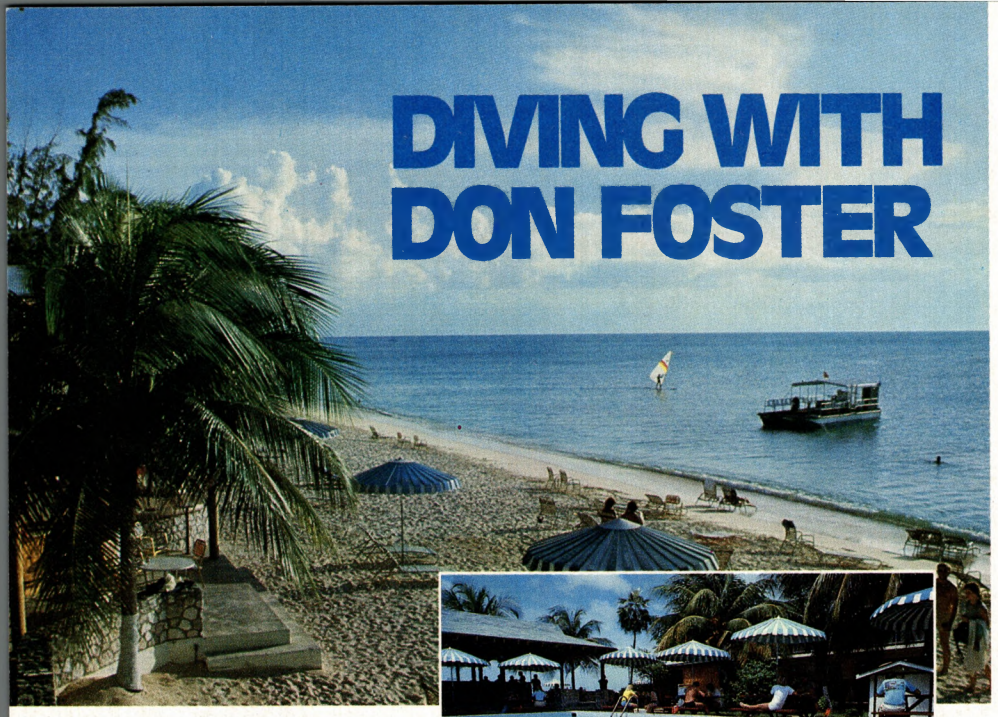
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DIVING WITH DON FOSTER

At Cayman's Fabulous Seven Mile Beach









photos/Geri Murphy

BY BARBARA A. CURRIE

That week in late April was a Cayman Dream in more ways than one. We had been planning this trip for almost a year and I was as excited about returning to Grand Cayman as my dive buddy Sandy was about logging bottom time for the first time in these waters.

I booked two Cayman Dream packages with Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman and the Royal Palms Hotel, an incredible Caribbean bargain in effect from April 15 to December 15. I chose Royal Palms because it's the ideal full-service hotel for newcomers to Cayman: It occupies one of the finest stretches of Seven Mile Beach; has a nice freshwater pool; restaurant; seaside bar; and all expected amenities. It's also convenient to George Town shopping and West Bay Road nightlife and restaurants. And, it is the home base for Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman, Ltd., an operation with the style I knew Sandy would enjoy—and had to date, never experienced. I knew she would be nonplussed by the service for which Foster's is famous.

In other destinations we had hauled our own tanks and bounced around in inflatables and Boston Whalers and, for the sheer joy of exploring the fathoms below, suffered on the surface. I wanted my friend to see how effortless diving could be in a professionally run dive operation that shows concern for its customers.

We arrived in mid-afternoon on Cayman Airways #407 from Miami at the new multi-million dollar terminal of Owen Roberts International Airport, a dazzling creation which, in my opinion, is the finest in the Caribbean. It was hardly what Sandy had expected after our Casablanca experiences elsewhere.

Thirty minutes later, we were on our way by taxi to the Royal Palms. After a brief detour through George Town for a view of the duty-free district we arrived in the recently renovated lobby of the resort—an attractive improvement.

Our vacation actually began when we boarded Cayman Airways in Miami. The package included air fare, seven nights and six days of diving and a shared standard room. It also included the bottle of champagne we found in our room, breakfast each morning, beach towels—and most important—six two tank boat dives, one night dive and unlimited air fills for offshore diving.

After unpacking, we shed our real world clothes and hit the beach to catch the last of the afternoon sun and sip a few of the tropical concoctions that are house specialties at the Palms' social center, the thatched roof oceanview bar.

Later, I showed Sandy around the resort and she agreed it was a good choice for her first visit to this island. The guests who filled the hotel were mostly young adults and some young families. Royal Palms offers enough comforts and recreation options to keep couples compatible throughout their stay. Non-diving spouses or companions have miles of beach and the pool when they want to get wet. When they want something more, a variety of sightseeing trips, by boat or guided taxi tour, are available through the dive shop.

The Royal Palms facilities include the full service 60 room hotel and its small shopping arcade featuring mini-grocery market, gift shop, beauty salon and Ocean Designs II, the branch of Jil Foster's unusual fashion boutique. The main store is in The Falls shopping center about two miles north.

The Terrace Room Restaurant, delightfully refurbished in tropical decor and light apricot tones, serves breakfast and dinner daily in a relaxed and enjoyable setting overlooking the pool and garden landscaping. Lunch is served daily, buffet barbecue-style, by the pool. The bar is one of the most popular watering holes on Seven Mile Beach and a good place to meet an interesting assortment of local characters and listen to tall island tales.

The Royal Palms complex also includes the 24 adjacent rooms in the Coral Wing next door, and 11 condo apartments (one, two and three bedroom) in the Coral Caymanian Apartments.

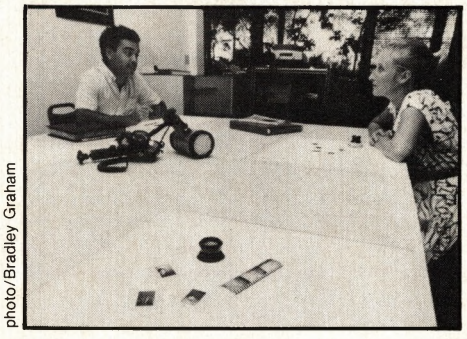
This latter is one of few Cayman resorts owned and operated by Caymanians. Early in 1982, the Kirkconnel family (well known for its business sense and successful shipping and merchant enterprises in the Cayman Islands) purchased the Royal Palms. The property was completely refurbished and its attractions combined with those of the Coral Caymanian complex next door, which the family had owned for over a decade. To keep the resort a family operation, the dive concession was taken over by neph-

ew Don Foster, whose 15 years of experience in Cayman's dive industry made him a natural choice.

While the resort has been improving and expanding during the past three years, so has Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman Ltd. The retail shop and sign-up station in the main lobby has been remodeled to include Jil's Ocean Designs II boutique, offering a selection of resort wear, fashions and accessories.

Last year, The Falls shopping center became the newest site of Foster's expansion, with the opening of Foster's Photos and Ocean Designs. Don and Jil now offer their dive customers the added bonus of a full-service photographic facility, complete with light tables; 24 hour E-6

Opposite page: Don Foster and his dog Scuba. The Royal Palms Hotel is right on fabulous Seven Mile Beach. Scuba instruction is given in the Royal Palms pool and on exciting reef locations reached by one of Don Foster's four dive boats. Below: Foster's Photos.



photo/Bradley Graham

processing (rush on request); Nikonos Vs, IIIs, lenses and strobes, Sea & Sea cameras for rent; and a variety of underwater photography courses.

Resident pro Bradley Graham, a graduate of Brooks Institute in Santa Barbara, CA, with a degree in underwater photography technology, offers beginning courses as well as advanced courses in macro, wide angle and marine life. PADI specialty courses in underwater photography are also available. Bradley also offers a "photo buddy" service on the Foster's fleet several times a week. Guests can have their pictures taken by this pro and buy them as souvenirs.

Next door to Foster's Photos is Ocean Designs, a small but elegant emporium offering an exclusive selection of island and resort wear, bathing suits, jewelry and accessories. This is Jil's pet venture and a very successful one to date. There are two sections—the men's fashions are in a separate shop next door.

We initially considered grabbing a cab up to The Falls, but decided to delay that shopping safari and continue relaxing at the hotel. After a dinner of fresh island-style wahoo in the Terrace Room, we returned to our room early to get our gear ready for the main theme of our vacation: the diving we had come to enjoy.

The next morning began with a dawn stroll along the beach and a quick swim. As we were drying off on the way back to the room, Sandy surprised me by admitting she was slightly uneasy about going on a boat dive that morning with a crowd of people. I assured her crowding is not Foster's policy—guest comfort is the primary concern of divemasters. She still balked at getting wet and we discussed it at breakfast.

"It's been a year since I've been diving and I really don't have that much experience: three, week-long dive trips in three years—60 dives. I had my gear serviced and checked before this trip—but I feel like I need me checked too," she said.

Although I have no qualms about arguing with a physician when it's my body under scrutiny, I wasn't about to question Sandy's conclusions. In fact, I completely agreed with her. Once, again, we couldn't have picked a better place for this spring break. Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman Ltd. offers a complete selection of diver training programs, from resort courses to full open water scuba certification. Of the 18 staff members nine are certified scuba instructors and three are divemasters.

Well before the 9:00 am morning boat dive we found Don, barefoot as usual and preparing the tanks for loading, and explained the problem.

"We are really encouraging divers like yourself to take a PADI Scuba Review course and I'm glad you admitted you felt a little uneasy. I wish more people would. The course is a simple but effective refresher for divers who have not been wet in awhile. We can do it this morning and dive this afternoon," Don suggested.

Sandy agreed immediately and I decided to stay dry and observe the course, waiting until my dive buddy was ready to sample Cayman's offshore offerings.

The PADI Scuba Review course concept is just more than a year old. The course cost is not part of the vacation package. It is a comprehensive program designed to update diving knowledge and skills. It includes a workbook for individual self-study covering topics important to diver safety that may tend to be forgotten over time—including a solid review of the no decompression tables.

In addition to the workbook review and exam, the course includes a skill review session in the pool. I watched Don and Sandy go through gear set-up, suiting up and pre-entry check out. Then, they worked together in the pool on swimming, breathing and general skills.

By the end of the morning, Sandy felt she had regained her confidence and sufficiently brushed up on diving and safety skills to be comfortable making a boat dive. The PADI Scuba Review terminology for this is "Environmental Orientation dive." By completing the course, she would receive a special PADI C-card decal which shows the year and the information that her Environmental Orientation dive took place in a Warm Ocean.

As we sat around before the 2:00 pm dive, Don and Jil joined us for a light lunch by the pool and expressed their enthusiasm for the review program.

"I'm an instructor and I haven't dived that much this year because of business responsibilites," Jil said. "If I were going to get back in the water now, I would probably take the course from one of our instructors myself. Everyone gets rusty. I can't think of anything more stress-filled than anxiety attacks on a dive boat. I think a lot of infrequent divers would enjoy their vacations a lot more if they'd just admit they're feeling uncomfortable and need a review of skills and procedures."

Our first dive surprised Sandy even before we took the giant stride onto Royal Palms Reef. The attentive service of Don's staff, assisting us with our gear and thoroughly explaining the dive plan and conditions below added to our feeling of well-being beneath the sea.

"This is unbelievable," Sandy said. "I feel like a VIP."

We stayed at 45 feet maximum throughout the dive, following schools of reef fish and poking around holes, discovering not only a small spotted moray but also two sizeable spiny lobsters. I pointed out an indigo hamlet and a neon yellow coney; several tennis-ball size arrowcrabs and a golden spotted eel snake—an interesting collection of reef creatures for openers. My dive buddy was grinning like a subdued barracuda when we surfaced.

"I feel great. It's all come back—and the visibility and creatures are terrific!" she said.

That evening we met Don and Jil at the Windjammer Lounge, in The Falls, for Happy Hour. The Windjammer is one of Grand Cayman's most popular night spots, a classy establishment furnished in natural woods and decorated in a man-

GRAND DIVE PACKAGE

In addition to the Cayman Dream package, divers can select the Grand Dive package at Royal Palms. This May 1-December 15 vacation option includes all tax and gratuities in the price and features choice of standard, superior or apartment accommodations; Don Foster's T-shirt or poster; use of tanks, backpacks, weights and belt and unlimited air fills for offshore diving.

Prices include three nights/two days, standard room, double occupancy with two, two tank boat dives; or seven nights/six days, standard room, double occupancy with six, two tank boat dives and one night dive.

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Greater Fort Lauderdale Ship Wreck Symposium

July 31-Aug.4

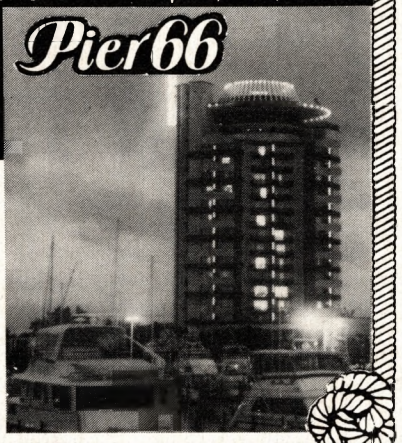
MEET IN PERSON

Robert Marx, Dimitri Rebikoff, Duncan Mathewson, Alan Allbright, Peter Throckmorton, Ellsworth Boyd, Dr. Harold Edgerton, Chuck Mitchell, Mel Fisher, Bert Kilbride, Gordon Watts, Dr. R.F. McAllister

& more, including representatives from the projects; the privateer "De Braak" and the pirate ship "Whidah".

TREASURE & ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXHIBITS -
Treasure of the "Atocha & "Margarita"
Chuck Mitchell's silver "Noon" cannons
and many more treasures of the sea!

Plus! Archaeological training, preservation techniques, films, lectures and workshops.
On-site wreck dives
Dive the "Mercedes"
Archaeological diver certification
Wreck diver certification, all available!



Please check one:

- ☐ Symposium and Poolside Lobster Luau $65.00 before June 15 (After/$90.)
- ☐ PLUS Two Dive Trips (four wreck dives) $55 additional
- ☐ Wreck Diver Certification $40. additional
- ☐ ALL OF THE ABOVE! $160. until June 15th/$185. after (lodging not included)
- ☐ Archaeological Diver Certification $295. (July 27 - July 30) Space limited to 30 divers.

Tax deductable. Make checks payable to:
BROWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION:
DEPT. 1-A, 100-B S.E. NEW RIVER DRIVE, FT. LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33301 / (305) 765-5587

LUXURY LODGING - Wednesday night 7/31 - Saturday night 8/3 - $110. per person/dbl. occ.
Archaeological Diver 7/27 - 7/30 $110. per person/dbl. occ.
For Reservations: Nationwide - 1-800-327-3796 / In Florida - 1-800-432-1956
Make lodging checks payable to: PIER 66 HOTEL, please add 7% sales tax.

The Greater Fort Lauderdale Ship Wreck Symposium
BROWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION/MARINE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

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FOSTER'S/ROYAL PALMS

ner you'd expect to find in a Yuppie orbit in the U.S. rather than a Caribbean island. Live music and disco are weekly attractions.

Also in The Falls complex is Santiago's, the only Mexican restaurant in the Cayman Islands, where margaritas by the pitcher are a specialty. Since we planned a full day of diving the next day, we decided not to tackle tequila and satisfied ourselves with some chile rellenos and chicken enchiladas before returning to the Windjammer dance floor for an hour's exercise at reggae and calypso.

We logged 11 dives during the rest of the week, including an outstanding night dive on the *Balboa*, a dive I'd made many times in my Cayman career. It still fascinates me because of the quantity of critters that inhabit the site at night. Sandy experienced Cayman's famous North Wall twice and several of the well known west coast sites: Sentinel Rock, Trinity Caves, Orange Canyon—and one of our mutual favorites, Eden Rock. The *Oro Verde* and its spring tide of silversides proved a real thrill—all of this was pure subsea discovery for my dive buddy and her dizzy enthusiasm for sites I knew made the trip much more fun.

On our last dive at the Aquarium, Brad Graham was along shooting his "photo buddy" candids and followed us, grabbing several "mermaids with schooling yellowtails" shots. They proved amusing souvenirs and Sandy bought several.

The Cayman Dream passed too quickly and we awoke a week later to face the reluctant activity of packing and departing on the afternoon Cayman flight. Putting on real world clothes again, rather than custom wetsuits for boarding *Adventure Diver*, *Undersea Diver*, or another of Don's four boats, we felt like two tadpoles suddenly trading tails for legs; a difficult but unavoidable manuever. But we had no regrets, like all great vacations, it left us wanting more.

"Same time, next year?" Sandy asked as we boarded the plane. "Dream on?"

It sounded fine to me.

For information and reservations contact Scuba Tours, (800) 526-1394; in New Jersey, (201) 256-9115. Or write Royal Palms, P.O. Box 490, Grand Cayman, B.W.I; phone (809) 949-2636. On Grand Cayman, telephone Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman, Ltd., 97025.

RIO RITA TRIPS

Sea Safaris Travel, Inc. is taking both group and individual bookings aboard the *Rio Rita* out of La Paz, Mexico through December 14. Trips leave on Sunday and return Saturday.

For information contact Sea Safaris Travel, Inc., in Manhattan Beach, CA

Fantasy Islands



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GALAPAGOS



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RED SEA



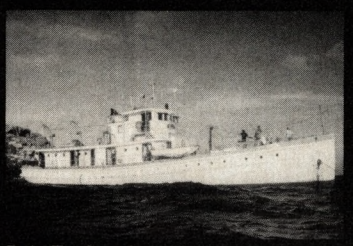
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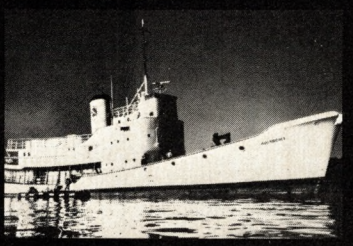
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CAYMAN ISLANDS



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GREAT WHITE SHARK



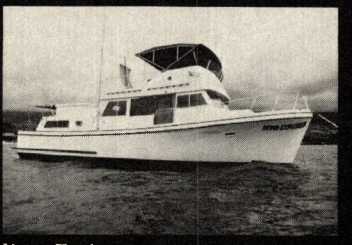
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Cadaques
GUADELOUPE



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Kona Explorer
HAWAII

Perhaps like many other divers you've never even considered spending your precious dive vacation living aboard a dive cruiser. Instead, you lug your gear back and forth to crowded hotel day-boats, only to dive the same old ho-hum reefs. You spend hours each day ashore, wishing you could be getting more diving. Rather than dive when you wish, you dive when the hotel lets you.

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Carl Roessler
President, See & Sea Travel Service, Inc.
Author, *The Underwater Wilderness*
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Divers Guide to the Cayman Islands

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$679.00 per person double occupancy *Effective April 15 through December 15, 1985*

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CAYMAN DREAM

(Continued from Page 111)

certain marine life to ensure great diving for many years to come.

A significant step forward has been taken with the formation of the Cayman Islands Watersports Operators Association. This cooperative effort among major dive operators has established a network of communication and a pooling of talent and resources for the primary purpose of diving safety and marine conservation. The association is presently endorsing and promoting, with the Cayman Islands government, a series of marine parks which will protect about 37 percent of Grand Cayman's coastline.

This year, Grand Cayman is more inviting than ever as a result of a new program called Cayman Dream. Cayman Airways, the national carrier, with modern jets, a new airport and an efficient and friendly attitude, has put together a series of packaged holidays with 12 selected hotel/guesthouses served by the most elite operators. Through December 15, the prime dive months, the packages, approved by the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, offer an eight day/seven night visit with diving, accommodations, a meal plan and roundtrip air fare from Miami to Grand Cayman.

For a brochure with additional information and prices, call Cayman Airways (800) 422-9626 or (800) GCAYMAN. Or contact: Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, 250 Catalonia, Suite 604, Coral Gables, FL 33134.

DIVERS UNLIMITED

(Continued from Page 107)

Mollie W after the Palm Beach lady who had it as a yard ornament.

Fort Lauderdale has hundreds of things besides diving to occupy your vacation time (SDM, May '85). Live music and good restaurants, such as the waterfront Coconuts, beside the Divers Unlimited docks, are everywhere. The city is in the center of some of Florida's best vacation attractions. The Everglades National Park, Lion Country Safari, Six Flags Atlantis, Ocean World, Parrot Jungle, Walt Disney World and Epcot Center are all close.

DU has its own magnetic appeal. Besides serving fresh sliced pineapple at the end of every dive or snorkel trip, the organization knows how to make your family dive vacation one of the most pleasant ever. With single day trips or packages ranging from three days to more than a week, they can also make it economical. For package information and reservations call (305) 981-0156 or (305) 524-4862. Or, write Divers Unlimited, Days Inn, 440 Seabreeze Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316.

THE BEST DIVING VACATION VALUE IN 1985.



Enjoy 8 days/7 nights of unlimited diving in The Bahamas and get a **FREE** Tekna Digital Dive Timer.

At last here's a diving vacation that has it all. Holiday Inn and The Underwater Explorer's Society (UNEXSO), invite you to experience the best of The Bahamas above water and at 100 ft below.

Your destination is Freeport, Grand Bahama, where you'll stay at The Holiday Inn, Freeport/Lucaya Beach Resort, located on the finest beach in Grand Bahama Island. Here you'll enjoy plenty of activities day and night. There's para-sailing, water skiing, sailing, tennis, a beautiful sun-drenched swimming pool, three restaurants, three bars/lounges, dazzling island floor shows, a lively discotheque and you'll be five minutes from two 18-hole golf courses and a casino.

Best of all, your vacation package includes up to three different boat dives per day, plus night dives, a FREE T-Shirt, luxurious accommodations, air-conditioned rooms, complimentary chaise lounge/towel at the beach or pool and a FREE Tekna Digital Dive Timer valued at $79.95 (U.S. Dollars).

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ONLY $575.00 per person double occupancy	ONLY $272.00 per person double occupancy
SINGLE: $795.00; TRIPLE: $535 pp FREE Tekna Digital Dive Timer	SINGLE: $366; TRIPLE: $254 pp includes all features except Digital Dive Timer

FREE TEKNA DIGITAL DIVE TIMER
(8 DAYS/7 NIGHTS ONLY)

NON-DIVERS PACKAGE
(Does not include Dive Timer)

4 DAYS/3 NIGHTS—single $192	double $117 pp	triple $ 99 pp	
8 DAYS/7 NIGHTS—single $448	double $273 pp	triple $231 pp	

*Subject to availability, effective 4/12/85–12/16/85

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Unlimited Diving 7 Night Package:

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- *1-night (boat) dive*
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SEA AGGRESSOR CRUISES

See & Sea Travel of San Francisco is offering live-aboard dive trips to the Bahamas on the *Sea Aggressor*. Ninety feet long, she can comfortably accommodate 13-20 divers. Cruises depart each Sunday from West Palm Beach, returning the following Saturday. Itineraries include blue holes, wrecks, diving with dolphins and superb coral gardens. Trips to the southern Bahamas will be scheduled during the winter months.



For further information contact See & Sea Travel, Inc.

GRAND BAHAMA SCUBA

A new scuba operation is opening at the Grand Bahama Hotel, West End, Grand Bahama (one of the Jack Tar Villages). UNEXSO will take over the diving and snorkeling activities and plans to promote scuba trips and diving instruction to the existing clientele of the Jack Tar Village at West End. UNEXSO will also bring in other divers, both from Freeport and on special packages available in the fall.

The Jack Tar Village at West End is a well established, all inclusive resort. It has the largest swimming pool in the western hemisphere. This 537 room resort, including 15 suites and two cottages, has its own private beach and marina. There is a choice of several dining rooms, three bars and lounges, live entertainment and native shows, tennis and golf. In addition to scuba and snorkeling, watersports include boating, deep sea fishing and waterskiing.

SOUTH COVE RENOVATED

South Cove Resort, on the shore near Georgetown on Grand Cayman, has been significantly renovated. The rooms have been tiled and repainted and the exterior of the resort has also been repainted. The dive shop has been completely rebuilt and new rental scuba equipment has been added. There are new dive boats and a new guest gear storage facility adjacent to the dive shop. Steve Knight and Terri Hodges, formerly at Spanish Cove, have been brought in as general managers.

For further information contact South Cove Resort at (800) 231-4610 or (305) 381-9954.

OCEAN DIVERS 305 451-1113
P.O. Box 1113 KEY LARGO, FL 33037

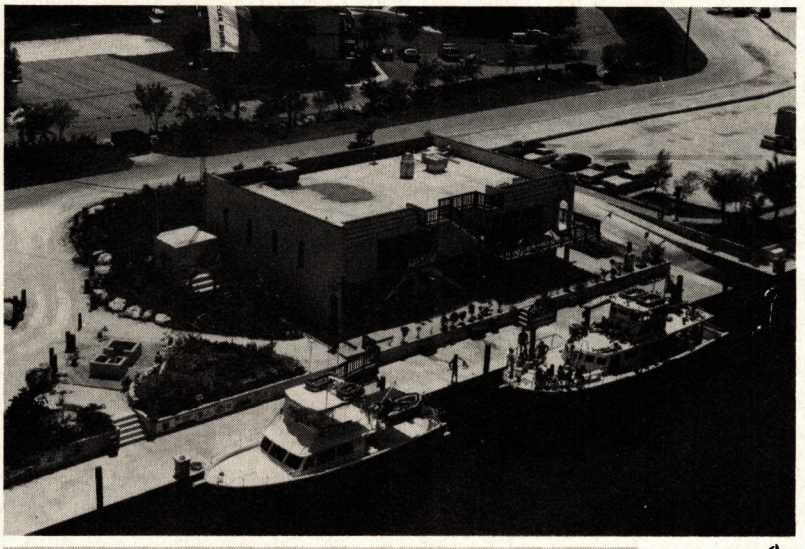
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FATHOM FIVE

Fathom Five Divers, in Old Koloa Town on the island of Kauai, has recently purchased a new dive boat to serve its expanding dive charter business. The new boat, *Tempest*, is a 24 foot Radon built for diving. Powered by twin Volvo engines, the *Tempest* quickly gets six divers



to some of Hawaii's best dive sites off the Poipu coast. The divemaster/guide dives with you to ensure safety and see you get the most out of each dive.

Fathom Five offers condo or hotel/drive/dive packages that include accommodations at Poipu Beach, on Kauai's sunny south side, a compact rental car and unlimited diving. A similar package is offered for those who wish to learn to dive while on Kauai.

For more information please call (808) 742-6991 or write Fathom Five, P.O. Box 907, Koloa, Kauai, Hawaii 96756.

CARIB INN BOAT

The Carib Inn on Bonaire recently received a new Privateer Renegade. This wide beamed boat is powered by a Johnson 185 hp outboard.

A second Privateer is planned that will have a shelter cabin and covered cockpit area for more extended dive trips.

The number of divers carried on the boats is limited, with an average of six per trip. Bruce Bowker, owner and manager of the Carib Inn, has maintained this policy to keep the reefs less crowded and make a much more enjoyable vacation for everyone.

For more information write to Bruce at the Carib Inn, P.O. Box 68, Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles.

AQUA ADVENTURES PACKAGES

Aqua Adventures is offering special three or seven night packages at the Ambassador Beach Hotel in Nassau that include free golf, tennis and windsurfing. On the beach in the heart of the new Cable Beach resort area, the Ambassador Beach offers first class accommodations, gourmet dining, nighttime entertainment and access to the adjacent Casino.

The dive operation is run by Capt. Stuart Cove of Coral Harbour Divers and operates from Lyford Cay Marina. Hotel pick-up is included.

For details and reservations contact the tour operator: Aqua Adventures, in New York City.

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Stay at the LAUDERDALE SURF, one of the finest resort hotels on the beach.

3 days/2 nights – 6 dives (dbl. occ.) $95.00
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Non-diver, single occupancy, and week long packages are available.

Dive Mollie's 200′ Mercedes!

The infamous freighter Mercedes I, which was beached for 3 months and became the talk of the nightly news, is sunk just off Lauderdale Beach. Now you can dive and photograph an intact freighter in shallow water!



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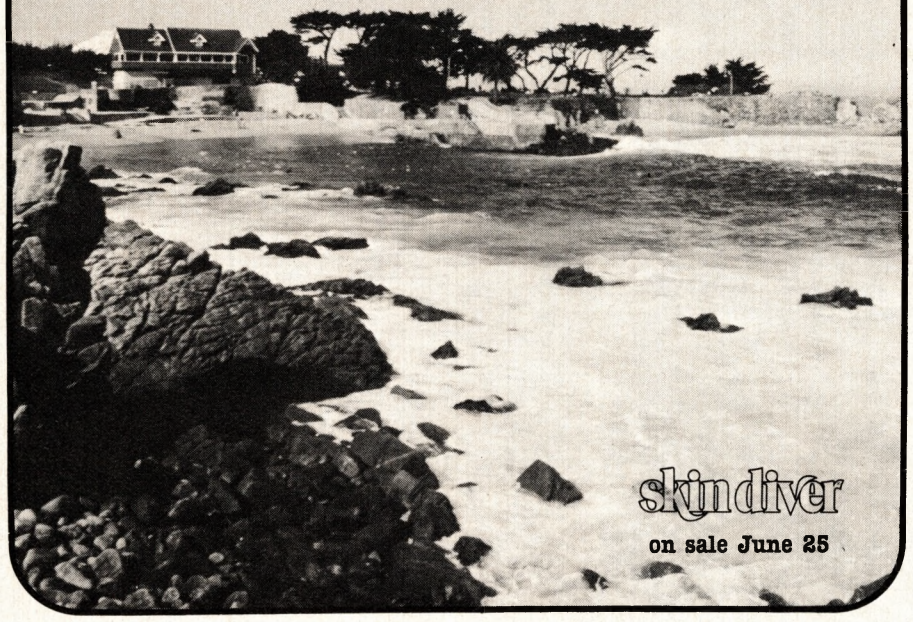
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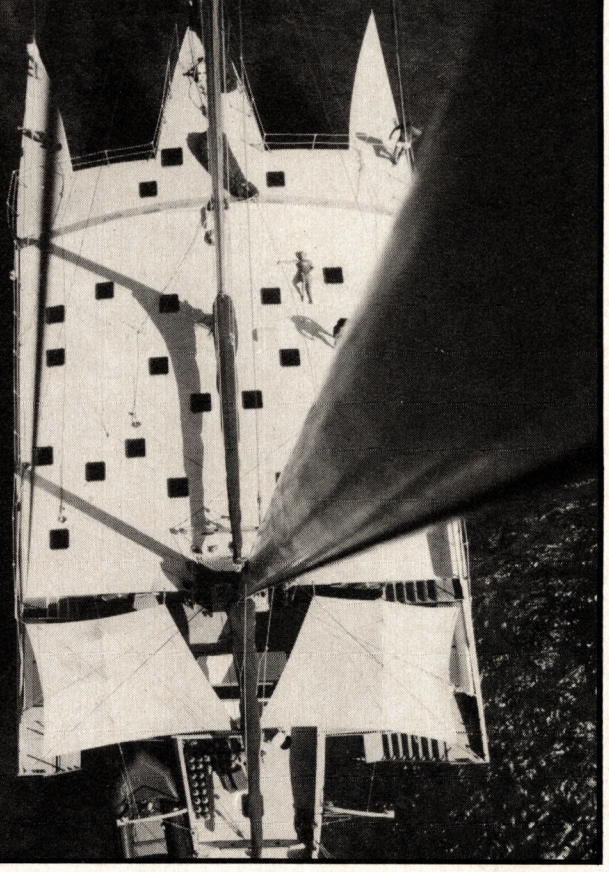
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CURACAO U/W PARK

Less than a year ago Curacao officially opened its latest national park, a 1,500 acre underwater wonderland of untouched coral reefs. Curacao Underwater Park, stretching for about 12 miles along the island's south coast, has proved an attraction not just for serious scuba divers but for ordinary tourists too. They can enjoy the marvels of reef life by snorkeling or riding in glassbottom boats.

The park, funded in part by the World Wildlife Fund, is designed to protect the ecology of the reef while making it available to divers and the general public.

A new guide to the underwater park has been printed and is available to visitors. It contains a map of the park plus color photographs and drawings of the different types of marine life found there.

For further information on the underwater park and other tourist attractions in Curacao, write to P.O. Box 1446, Radio City Station, New York, NY 10101-1446.

ANTHONY'S KEY RESORT

Peter Hughes Diving, Inc. is extending its eight day/seven night July special, Dive 'n Save package at Anthony's Key Resort through August and September. For reservations please call (800) 227-DIVE, in Florida (305) 858-DIVE.

CARIBBEAN SCUBA SCHOOLS

In order to increase the quality of diving services offered in Cozumel, Gabriel Nayar of Caribbean Divers and Jim Sellers, formerly of the NASDS Instructors' College in San Diego, have formed the first full service NASDS/Club Aquarius facility in Cozumel.

Instructional services now offered at Caribbean Scuba Schools include NASDS snorkeling classes and trips, scuba experiences, basic and open water certifications, the expert program and its individualized courses.

Complete diving packages including hotels and transfers are available with a choice of eight hotels. Double, triple and single occupancy are available. Packages range from four days/three nights to eight days/seven nights. Special packages may be arranged upon request. Individual excursions are also available including two tanks, weights, backpack, lunch, sodas and a fully qualified NASDS dive coordinator or open water instructor. Group rates may be obtained by request.

For information please telephone Luz Maria Martinez, overseas sales manager or Jim Sellers, manager, at (987) 21080 and 21426 or write to P.O. Box 191, Cozumel, Quintana Roo, Mexico 77600.

DON FOSTER'S MANAGERS

Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman Ltd. has added three managers:

Cheryl Hamilton, from Calgary, Canada, formerly divemaster and dive shop assistant, is now manager of diving services with the responsibility of overseeing dive headquarters activities at the Royal Palms Hotel.

Bradley Graham, from San Diego, has been named manager of photographic services. He has a B.A. in underwater technology and color technology from Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, CA. Bradley shoots underwater video tapes for sale and conducts underwater photo courses.

Theresa Swinney, from Cheshire, England, who worked in hotels in England and the Channel Islands before coming to Grand Cayman, is the new retail manager of Jil Foster's three boutiques—one at the Royal Palms, the others at the new Cayman Falls Shopping Centre. She is also an underwater model.

Don Foster's dive operation, only three and one-half years old, employs a staff of 18, including eight full time instructors and operates four boats that handle an average of 50 divers a day.

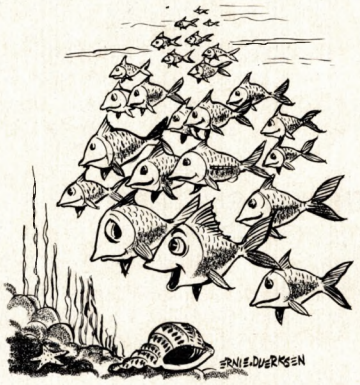
For information on diving and underwater photo packages, call Scuba Tours at (800) 526-1394.

BONAIRE DOCK

A freak storm that hit Bonaire last November destroyed the dock at Captain Don's Habitat. A month later, the new dock extended well beyond the old one. It accommodates three of Habitat's dive boats and facilitates diving the reef in front of Habitat during day or night.

Habitat is an intimate resort that has served divers since 1976. It is Bonaire's only PADI Five Star training facility as well as being an SSI associate facility.

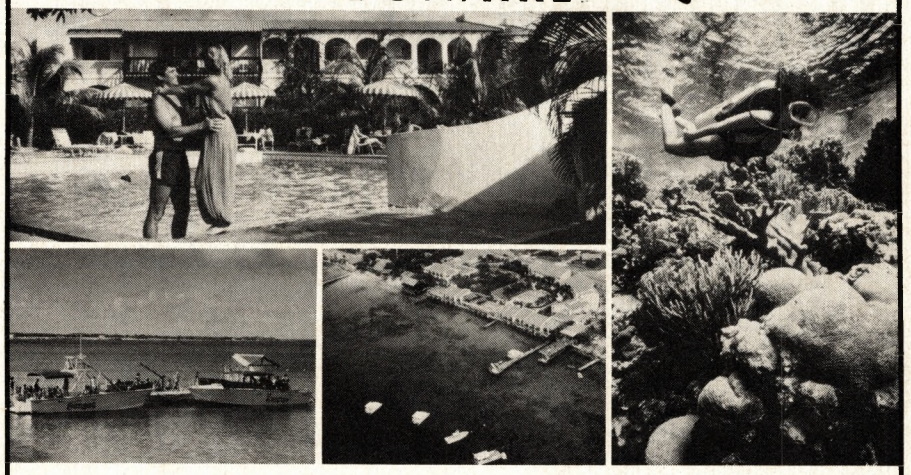
Captain Don Stewart has been instrumental in preserving Bonaire's reefs, from the conception and design of permanent dive boat moorings to the establishment of the Bonaire Marine Park and the prohibition of spearfishing.



"There's one thing I'd like to know—if this is a *school*, when do we *graduate*?"

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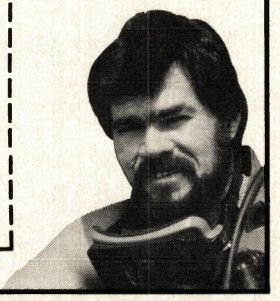
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___Tiara Beach Hotel in Cayman Brac.
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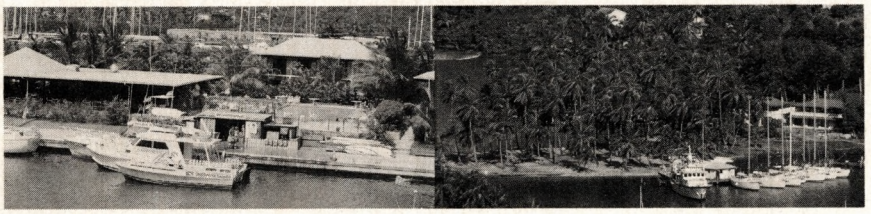
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Ocean Designs

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Or call 74324 (locally)

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LA MER/EUGENIE CLARK

Dr. Eugenie Clark will lead three special expeditions for La Mer Diving Seafaris this year. The expeditions, open to certified divers, will explore the reefs off Western Australia, the Sea of Cortez and the Red Sea, each focusing on a particular realm of Dr. Clark's expertise beneath the surface.

The special Red Sea expeditions are June 24-July 8 and July 12-26. La Mer is the only diving operator to offer programs on the 85 foot *Fantasea*.

The special expedition to Western Australia offers a new frontier beneath the surface for American divers, exploring the virgin atolls of Rowley Shoals August 16-September 3.

The Sea of Cortez expedition, scheduled for November 3-14, will focus on behavioral studies of the manta rays, hammerhead and whale sharks, plus the unique plankton found in the area.

All the La Mer special expeditions are live-aboard programs limited to an intimate group of 10-14 to provide maximum dive and unique photography opportunities.

SPANISH COVE PHOTO TOUR

In response to the very specific needs of the underwater photographer, Spanish Cove Resort on Grand Cayman has introduced a photo tour package. Designed by resort consultant and underwater photographer Stephen Frink, the package will guarantee that no more than 12 divers will ever be on the dive boat. Also, the divemasters will be aware of the requirements of the underwater photographer and will structure the dive to optimize the photographic potential. The dive boat will be equipped with freshwater camera rinse; a compressed air blowgun for camera maintenance; camera storage area; and a dry, shaded film change area. The photo tour package will include airport transfers, welcome cocktail, T-shirt, deluxe air-conditioned accommodations at Spanish Cove, three meals daily, unlimited diving and processing for two rolls of E-6 film per day.

Reservations will be on a first come, first served basis. To reserve space on the photo tour package please contact Spanish Cove Resort at (800) 231-4610 or (305) 381-9954.

BONAIRE SUMMER CELEBRATION

Bonaire's Bachelor's Beach Apartments celebrates the summer with a new 30 foot pier for divers and swimmers and beautiful landscaping with palm trees and lush tropical plants. For information call Bachelor's Beach Apartments (202) 244-5046.

HOLIDAY INN PACKAGE

Love to dive but hate the hassle of lugging all the gear, getting a boat and then finding just the right spot? Holiday Inn Directly on the Ocean, Pompano Beach, has the solution. Two tanks, backpack, weightbelt and a chartered boat are provided. You'll enjoy a wreck and reef dive in the waters east of the hotel.

More than a dozen wrecks are waiting to be explored including the *Gil Blas* that went down in 1835 and the popular Cumberland Barge, commonly referred to as the *Copenhagen*.

This package also includes luxury guest accommodations with kitchenette, full American breakfast and a complimentary cocktail.

Holiday Inn Directly on the Ocean will also host a bring your own lobster bake on the beach, July 20 and 21, the first two days of lobster season.

The package is available through Dec. 14, holidays excluded.

CAYOS COCHINOS TRIP

Jim Foster of the Indian River Dive Club will return to his favorite dive spot this summer when he leads a dive group to Plantation Beach Resort, Cayos Cochinos, Republic of Honduras. For more information, call Jim at (305) 287-3018 or call Plantation Beach Resort, (713) 789-6790 or (800) 231-1043. The trip departs Miami.

BIDRA

The Bay Islands became a British Colony in 1852 and were ceded to the Republic of Honduras in 1861. These islands are known for their superb diving and interesting history.

The Bay Island Dive Resort Association promotes this Caribbean paradise through collective advertising efforts and travel packages. BIDRA works closely with Tan Sahsa Airlines and Hondurian Tourism to provide resort guests with the best travel arrangements.

Newly elected officers of BIDRA are Tom Fouke, president; Jackie Jeffries, vice-president; Teres Whitney, secretary; Lisa Messina, treasurer. The new officers, along with all the BIDRA members, are currently monitoring the new international airport in Roatan scheduled for opening in late November. This new connection makes travel to this area easier.

BIDRA membership includes CoCo View Resort, Roatan Lodge, Caribbean Sailing Yachts and Anthony's Key Resort on Roatan; Plantation Beach Resort on Cayos Cochinos; Barbaretta Beach Club on Barbaretta; and Bayman Bay Club on Guanaja and associate member Tan Sahsa Airlines. The resorts cater to seasoned divers as well as vacationers who merely want to get away from it all. For more information on the Association or the Bay Islands write to P.O. Box 7047, Wesley Chapel, FL 34249.

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For further information, contact See & Sea Travel Service.

SCUBABOWL '85

Scubabowl 1985, Grand Cayman's dive travel training program, is scheduled September 28-October 3. The price includes hotel, diving, air fare from Miami, ground transportation and PADI promotional fees. The Grand Cayman Holiday Inn is this year's host hotel.

The tentative program for the event will include four, three hour lectures; daily diving; and social events in the evening, sponsored by dive operators and hotels.

Paul Tzimoulis of SKIN DIVER Magazine and Jeff Nadler of PADI are among the invited guest lecturers, discussing travel trends and benefits to dive shops.

Scubabowl 1985, like its successful predecessors, is aimed at showing dive store professionals how they can increase their profits from dive travel, extend their personal network to others in the business and enjoy the best diving combined with innovative training.

For information and reservations contact: Scubabowl 1985, 1243 E. Warner Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705; telephone (714) 540-7234. Registration, limited to 125, closes September 1.

PHOTO ROATAN

Photo Roatan has recently expanded its photographic services with the addition of a complete underwater video system. The system, including the custom Aqua Video housing equipped with the latest JVC Panasonic camera, recorder and other related accessories and components will now allow guests at Anthony's Key Resort to have personalized video tapes of themselves and/or their dive groups made. Stock tapes of the resort property and the U/W environment of Roatan will also be available.

Resident photo pro, Chaz Kafer, will be offering instruction in underwater video along with the rest of his professional

services. To better serve their clients the owners of Anthony's Key Resort have expanded the size of the new photo lab.

A wide screen TV has also been added to the resort's inventory and is in the con-

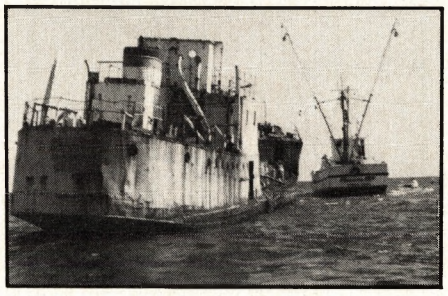


ference hall next to the bar and restaurant. The TV is available to guests for viewing their personalized tapes and/or their own efforts at underwater video. Selected movies are also shown weekly for the entertainment of all guests.

COCO VIEW WRECK

After months of preparation and a mishap that nearly scuttled the project, the *Prince Albert*, a 140 foot steel hulled tanker, has been sunk as a CoCo View Resort beach dive site on the south shore of Roatan in the Honduras Bay Islands.

As a dive attraction and station for coral growth studies, the vessel has been positioned for easy accessibility at the

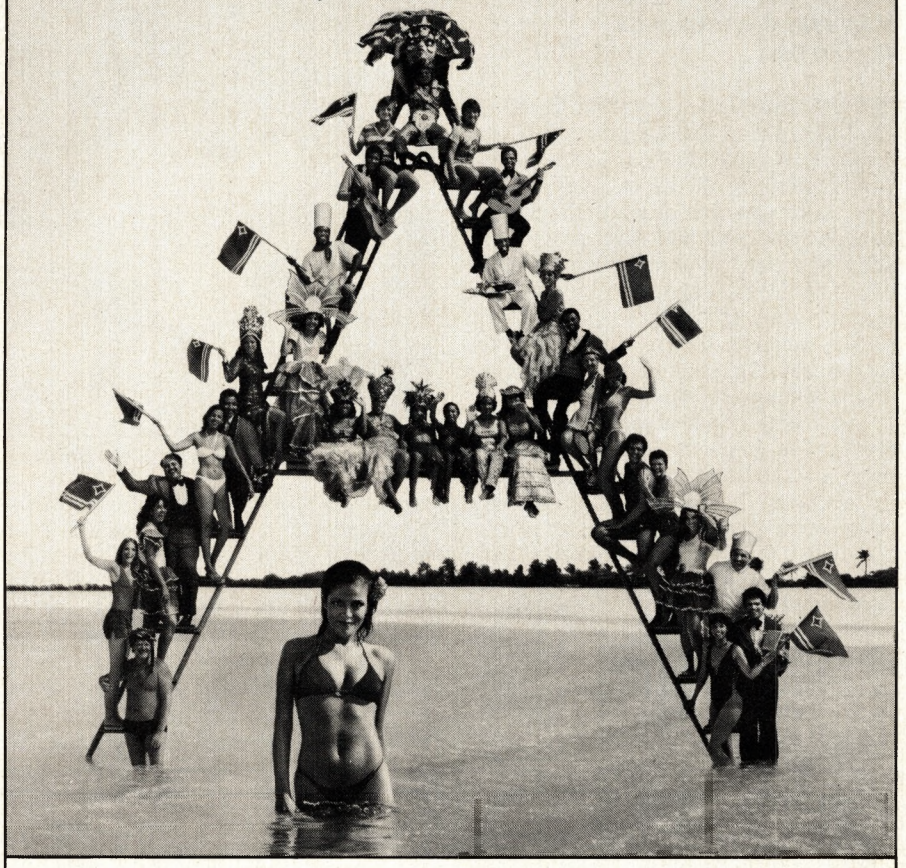


mouth of a natural channel approximately 100 yards from the resort clubhouse. Her keel lies in 65 feet of water, her wheelhouse in 20 feet. Adjacent to the wreck is CoCo View Wall, one of Roatan's spectacular 100 foot drop-offs.

In preparation for sinking, the *Prince Albert's* hatches and cables were removed and four by six foot holes were cut through bulkheads and tanks for easy exploration of the vessel's interior.

CoCo View Resort opened on the south shore of Roatan two and a half years ago and is on a private peninsula two miles east of French Harbour. Roatan businessman, Albert Jackson, donated the tanker to the resort. Jackson owns Blue Water Seafoods, a major supplier of shrimp and lobster to the popular Red Lobster Restaurant chain.

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BARQUE ARABIA

Divers Place Commemorative Stone In Lake Huron

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAN ORR



The dive team from Wright State University placed the monument on the *Arabia*.

The *Arabia*, built in Kingston, Ontario in 1853, sailed the cargo routes from the ports on Lake Michigan to the eastern Great Lakes for 88 years. She and her crew were veterans of the unpredictable autumn gales that had claimed so many ships and men. They had seen the Great Lakes cargo trade change from the era of wooden ships and silent sail to the steam engine belching smoke on the horizon. By the late 19th century, the days of sail on the lakes were numbered.

The *Arabia's* final voyage began October 1, 1884 when she left the port of Chicago, with 20,000 bushels of corn, bound for Midland, Ontario on Georgian Bay, Lake Huron. Under her master, Henry Douville, the *Arabia* moved slowly through the Straits of Mackinac and into northern Lake Huron. On October 4, about 70 miles from Tobermory and the entrance to Georgian Bay, she encountered a fierce gale that marked the beginning of the end. Her crew valiantly manned the pumps and for the next 18 hours fought gale force winds, mountainous waves and freezing spray to keep her afloat. After she passed the lighthouse at Cove Island the strain was showing and she began to settle. At approximately 3:00 am on October 5 her master gave the order and all hands scrambled for the yawl as she slid below the icy waters off Echo Island. The crew was rescued later that day by a tug, the *Clark*, and taken to Wiarton, Ontario.

The final resting place of the *Arabia* had remained a mystery for nearly 90 years. She was finally discovered in the fall of 1971 by Captain Albert Smith of Tobermory, Ontario. The general area had actually been known years earlier to local fisherman, who called it the Corn Wreck because the fish caught in this area were found to contain corn. Preliminary investi-



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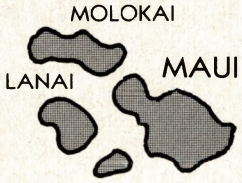
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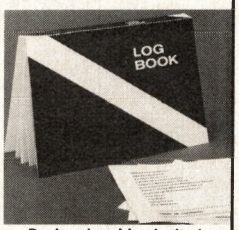
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BARQUE ARABIA

gation and identification of the wreck were conducted under the direction of Stan McClellan, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The *Arabia* rests 110 feet below the surface 300 yards off Echo Island within what is now the Fathom Five Provincial Park.

In the spring of 1984 I received permission from the Fathom Five Provincial Park and the Ontario Ministry of Parks to cele-

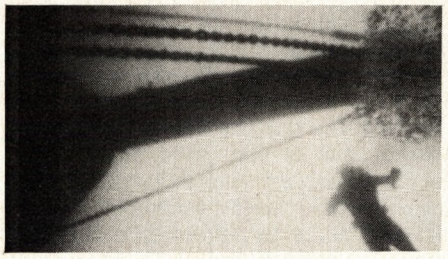


brate the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the *Arabia* by placing a memorial stone next to the wreck.

Our arrival in Tobermory was marked by a rapid deterioration in the weather, reminiscent of an October 100 years before that claimed not only the *Arabia* but also the schooners *Shandon* and *Golden West*. The weather the morning of the dive was cold and grey with a stiff wind blowing. Our boat, the *Mamie*, a veteran of the lakes (chartered from G & S Watersports and captained by Jay Harris), paid no attention to the blustery October weather, as she plowed on through the swells to the wreck site. Tying up to one of two permanent mooring buoys (placed at the site to protect the wreck) was accomplished quickly despite the waves. The divers were divided into four teams, each with a specific task to perform relative to the placement of the stone. Team one (John Obara, Frank Baltes) was assigned the task of attaching a cable from the *Mamie* to the stern of the wreck and selecting the site for placement of the stone. Team two (Pat Willoughby and myself) had to take the stone (attached to the connecting cable) to the stern of the wreck and ready it for movement to its final resting place. Team three (Bob Kane, Mitch Gannon) had to remove the stone from the connecting cable and move it to its final resting place. Team four (Bill Browning, Randy Eilders) had to remove the specially designed carrying crate and place the stone in its final resting position plus return all rigging to the boat. Following the predive briefing with the divemaster, each team discussed its dive plans with the surface support supervisor, Betty Huffman. Each team was limit-

ed to only 12 minutes of bottom time. Each team briefed the following dive team as to the completion or modification of its task so that everyone knew what to expect. Some changes had to be made in procedures but in our numerous predive briefings we had considered nearly all possible contingencies and when something didn't go as planned there was always a backup plan that worked. All tasks were completed after one dive by each team and the memorial stone now rests against the taffrail approximately 10 feet from the ship's wheel. Yes, I did say ship's wheel. It is on the bottom, still attached to the steering gear next to the wreck. Dead-eyes, anchors, block and tackle, masts, spars and more can be seen *but not removed* by the visiting diver. It must be remembered that the *Arabia* and all her artifacts are within the Fathom Five Provincial Park and removal of anything constitutes a crime.

Diving the *Arabia* involves following a yellow permanent mooring line to a 500 pound concrete mooring block on the bottom. A light connecting line then leads the diver to the wreck. There are two mooring blocks, with connecting lines either going aft to the starboard railing, just forward of the yawl davit, or forward, just aft the starboard anchor. Leaving the mooring block you follow the connecting line toward the faint, unmistakable silhouette. Swimming closer reveals the intact bow of a 19th century sailing ship. I've seen that sight over a dozen times, but each time the experience is electrifying. To your right the 30 foot bowsprit and supporting chain shrouds point toward the surface. In front of you is the mammoth wooden stock of one of her two huge anchors. A close look at the shaft of



the port anchor reveals the letters A.E. Hart. Who or what it refers to remains a mystery. To your left, the starboard side railing, with attached deadeyes, fades into the darkness. As you swim over the motionless anchor windlass, you see a large Sampson post and the pump. Handles missing, the pump is forever frozen in its last position, mute testimony to those last frantic, desperate moments. You pause a moment trying to imagine what it must have been like on that autumn day 100 years ago—the wail of the winds in the rigging and the cries of sailors frantically trying to save their stricken ship. But now it's silent, save for the rythmic sound of breathing and the exhaust bubbles racing toward the surface.



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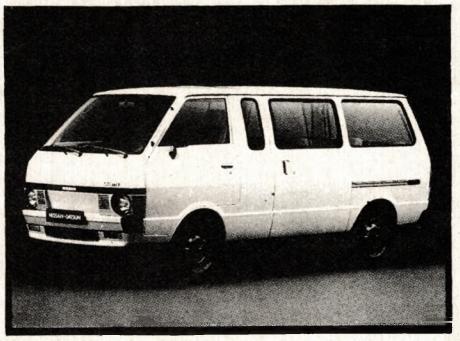
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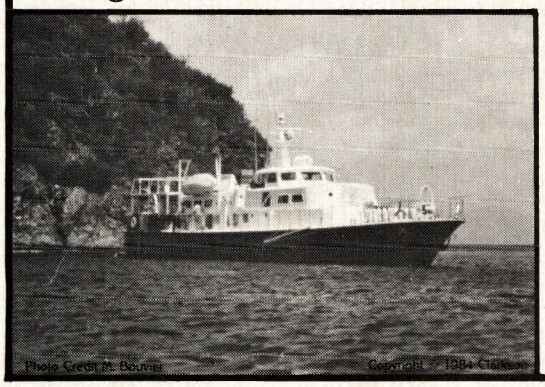
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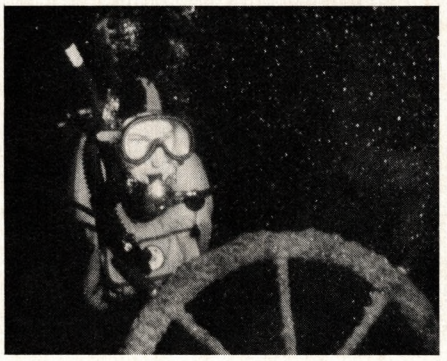
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BARQUE ARABIA

Swimming down the port side railing, you pass the now fallen mainmast with its cross trees and wire rope shrouds no longer straining against the wind. To your left is the centerboard and its winch resting inside the hull. After 100 years submerged the hull has spread and the decking has fallen and, with that, the masts. Continuing down the railing and past the mizzen mast you see a deckhouse door and cook stove. The stern is less intact and takes some concentration. Its destruction probably occurred as the *Arabia*



settled to the hard bottom. Looking around, you see the rudder, quarter deck, taffrail and, nearby, the ship's wheel. What diver can resist the urge to grab hold and in his/her imagination fight the boiling sea and howling winds as her crew once did? A quick glance at your watch tells you time is running out and you must return to the surface. As you ascend the mooring line you take with you the special memories of this unique diving experience. You touched history and were touched in return.

During the last fleeting minutes of that special dive, hands on the ship's wheel, sail the imaginary ship through the storm-tossed seas of your mind. Before you leave, glance over your shoulder and see the light gray laser-inscribed memorial stone left there by a group of divers that wanted to pay homage to the history and the experience of the *Arabia*. The stone is inscribed: *Arabia*—built: Kingston, Ontario 1853; foundered: October 5, 1884; commemorated: October 5, 1984. "Celebrate the history and the experience." Underwater Education Program, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio.

Author's note: I am still investigating the history of the Arabia and would appreciate any information concerning the history of the ship or its crew. I am particularly looking for information regarding the inscription on the shaft of the port anchor: A.E. Hart. Send information to: Dan Orr, Director, Underwater Education Program, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio 45435.

ABALONE PLANT

BY NANCI WECHSLER

SKIN DIVER Magazine recently published an article about an abalone plant in the Southern California Channel Islands. The idea was innovative and environmentally sound and Bud Davis signed up to participate. Having been diving for abalone for more than 20 years and enjoying the fruits of the sea, he felt good about putting a little back.

We live and do most of our diving off the rugged, primitive, Northern California coast. The ocean is rich with life here—kelp beds are full of fish, urchins, anemones, starfish, nudibranchs and abalone. Although it may not yet be crucial or vital to survival of the abalone on the north coast that we control their harvest, divers are making a noticeable dent in the population here. Abalone are regulated as to season, size and bag number. And, divers may not take abalone with scuba gear north of Yankee Point. These efforts have aided the abalone population here greatly, but Bud thought that the program in Southern California was fun and fruitful and decided to organize a similar endeavor here on our north coast.

The Russian Gulch State Park was chosen as the site of the First Annual Northern California Abalone Plant because it has a protected cove with easy access. A proposal was written up and with the help of California Fish and Game, a donation of $10,000 was received from Arco for the endeavor. Ten thousand baby abalone were purchased from a farm in Estero Bay. This precious cargo was flown in a private plane by Art Adams from the nursery near San Luis Obispo to the tiny Little River Airport near Russian Gulch State Park. A gentle flight and short travel time greatly increased the abs' chances of survival.

At Russian Gulch, the little abalone, seemingly in good shape, active and with tentacles extended, met up with an energetic group of about 60 volunteer divers—ready to contribute time and energy to the resources of the ocean.

The group listened to the recommendations of Steve Schultz of California Fish and Game and built a remarkable habitat to protect and nurture 6,000 of the baby abalone. Another 4,000 were planted individually in natural habitats—protected little rock crevices under the kelp bed. Urchins and starfish were removed from the immediate area. CenCal Dive Council provided participants with certificates of accomplishment.

It was a lot of fun and a rewarding experience. We look forward to evaluating our success by inspecting the area in years to come. We hope it will become an annual event—for the pleasure of divers and for the protection of our local resource—the abalone.

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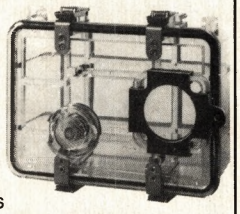
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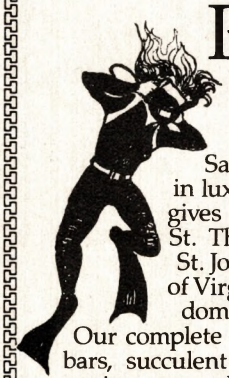
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SCHIZOPHRENIC PHOTOGRAPHER

BY DICKIE WALLS AND PHYLLIS CATHEY

The underwater photographer is an incongruous mixture of three personalities: technologist, artist and diver. The task of making temperamental terrestrial equipment perform complex calculated functions in a hostile environment falls to the technologist. The goal of preserving and sharing an individual perspective of the underwater environment belongs to the artist. Unfortunately, the technologist and the artist must share the same mind with the scuba diver and function as a beleagured unit. There is an animosity between the artist and the technician that often causes the diver to throw them both out and leave the camera on the boat. The artist feels a need to share his perspective of the sea with others, the technologist is enthralled with gadgetry and the diver wants to have a good time exploring the reef.

These three personalities pursue the common goal of capturing impressions of the marine world. In this quest, they pass collectively through three phases of expertise. As a beginning photographer they grapple with preserving reality as best they can. As a skilled photographer they use practiced techniques to capture reality as they find it and ultimately as a creative photographer they use technology to forge a unique perspective of reality. With the acquisition of each new skill, the diver loses control and the technologist and the artist gradually take over.

Deficiencies of technological ability identify the beginning photographer. The technologist is responsible for control of exposure, parallax, lighting, equipment care and maintenance. Lack of these skills means most beginners enjoy their pictures much more while taking them than when viewing the end result (so do their friends). Disastrous mistakes are common and at no other time during the path to better photography does the technologist feel so inadequate.

During this period the technologist receives (and deserves) critical harassment. The artist is aghast at the fuzzy, unacceptable images captured film; the diver is bereaved when a flooded camera and broken strobe screw up his good time. The beginning photographer often mumbles incoherent excuses about O-rings and f stops. The artist and the diver gang up on the technologist and enroll him in photography courses while demanding he mend his ways. Through determination and proper training, the technologist within the beginning photographer may overcome bad habits and mistakes: Suddenly the equipment works

and the pictures become sharp and acceptable. The photographer begins to enjoy both taking and looking at his pictures. The ability to produce properly exposed and focused photographs marks



the transition to skilled photographer.

The traditional initiation ritual of a skilled photographer involves spending an amazing amount of money on new equipment. The diver and the artist make this concession to the technologist as a reward for learning the basics of lighting and focus. The skilled photographer is able to photograph the reality around him in recognizable form and begins collecting fish pictures and various scenes he finds when he falls into the water. This is a time of refinement for the technologist as he strives to attain the speed and agility to focus on fast swimming fish. Practice and concentration develop the ability for instant exposure calculations. The technologist floods less equipment but spends most of the diver's expendable income on accessories, film and processing. The artist notices improvement in image quality and begins to develop a working partnership with the technologist. As the artist becomes more demanding, shots that used to be acceptable begin to land in the trash. The artist begins to dictate where the diver goes during the dive and demands better diving skill, perfect buoyancy control, less silt and total concentration on what the artist wants. Friends are amazed at the transition and begin to call the photographer creative.

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control. The diver is the vehicle and packmule of the artist, carrying equipment anywhere the artist dictates. His direction, depth and efforts are all controlled to produce the best photographic opportunities during the dive. The technologist "techs" for the artist, operating the equipment to the specification of the artist. The artist is no longer bound to the reality he sees, but pursues the reality he



perceives. Through absolute control over the technologist, skills of lighting, wide angle distortion, macro and filters, the artist is free to create, to form images as he wills them to be. Mastery of technique allows the artist to express imagination. This ability to see unusual opportunities in ordinary subject matter creates new perspective and gives the photographer the initiative to capture unique images. Through application of camera perspective, skill and trickery, creative photographers produce their own vision of reality.

During the ascension of the creative photographer the artist and the technologist maintain strict discipline over the diver. The artist compels the diver to travel the world in search of new opportunities to create the unique. The technologist demands the resources of the diver to upgrade and replace obsolete equipment and is constantly taxed by the artist to become faster and more proficient. Fortunately, the diver benefits from this relationship and stoically accepts the burden of diving exotic places. He can justify spending all his time and resources at the command of the domineering artist as he collaborates to express a creative interpretation of the undersea world as he (they) perceive(s) it.



Helix won't be overpriced in underwater

NIKONOS SPECIAL



Nikonos V w/35mm f2.5 lens - CALL FOR DETAILS

SPECIAL NIKONOS PACKAGES	
NIKONOS V PACKAGE WITH 35MM UWN, DIVE LIGHT & LIGHTWEIGHT CASE (18X13X6")	404.00
AS ABOVE (NIKONOS PACKAGE) PLUS AQUAFLASH 28 & LIGHT MOUNT	719.00
AS ABOVE (NIKONOS V PACKAGE) WITH EXT. TUBE SET (1:1, 2:1 & 2:1)	474.00
DELUXE NIKONOS V PACKAGE SAME AS ABOVE **PLUS** AQUAFLASH 28, LIGHT MOUNT, DIVE LIGHT, EXTENSION TUBE SET, CASE & UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY BOOK!	789.00

NIKONOS LENSES	
15MM NIKKOR U/W LENS	699.00
18MM F3.5 SEA & SEA LENS FOR NIKONOS	319.00
28MM NIKKOR U/W LENS	164.00

FINDERS FOR NIKONOS	
IKELITE OPTICAL VIEWFINDER	$ 67.50
NIKONOS 15MM OPTICAL VIEWFINDER DF-11	159.00
NIKONOS 35/80 SPORTSFINDER	12.00
NIKONOS 28/35MM OPTICAL VIEWFINDER	85.00
OCEANIC OPTICAL VIEWFRINDER FOR NIKONOS III	45.00
SEA & SEA OPTICAL VIEWFINDER (18, 28, 35)	46.00

EXTENSION TUBES FOR NIKONOS	
HELIX EXTENSION TUBE SET FOR 35 UWN (1:1, 1:2, 2:1)	$ 69.00
HELIX EXTENSION TUBE W/FRAMER (1:1 FOR 35 UWN)	27.50
HELIX EXTENSION TUBE W/FRAMER (1:2 FOR 35 UWN)	27.50
HELIX EXTENSION TUBE W/FRAMER (1:3 FOR 35 UWN)	27.50
HELIX EXTENSION TUBE W/FRAMER (1:1.8 F/28 UWN)	27.50
HELIX EXTENSION TUBE W/FRAMER (1:2.75 F/28 UWN)	27.50
DELUXE SET (2:1, 1:1, 1:2, 1:3) FOR 35 UWN	97.00
MASTER SET (1:1.8, 1:2.75) FOR 28 UWN AND (2:1, 1:1, 1:2, 1:3) FOR 35 UWN	125.00

STROBES & ACCESSORIES



Sunpak Marine 32 for Nikonos III, IV, V $ 209.00 (featured at right)

Popular Aqua F-3 . . . $ 149.50

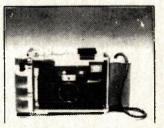
HELIX AQUAFLASH 28 W/ARM & TRAY (NIKONOS I, II, III, IV, V)	$ 329.00
HELIX AQUAFLASH 28 W/ARM & TRAY (EO OR ICS)	339.00
HELIX HSA SHORT ARM, 8" F/AQUAFLASH 22/28	9.95
HELIX HLM LIGHT MOUNT F/AQUAFLASH 22/28	10.50
HELIX 6" EO TO NIKONOS I/II	52.00
HELIX 6" EO TO NIKONOS III/IV/V	52.00
IKELITE SUBSTROBE HANIMEX OR SEA & SEA SLAVE	104.50
IKELITE SUBSTROBE M (REQ. SYNC CORD)	104.00
IKELITE SUBSTROBE MS SLAVE	123.00
IKELITE SUBSTROBE 150 (REQ. SYNC CORD)	355.00
NIKONOS SB-101 SPEEDLITE	279.00
NIKONOS SB-102 SPEEDLITE W/CASE & DIFFUSER	559.00
NIKONOS SB-103 SPEEDLITE W/CASE & DIFFUSER	289.00
***ASK ABOUT THE NIKON $100.00 REBATE ON NIKONOS V WITH SB103**	
IKELITE SUBSTROBE MV-TTL W/CORD	178.00
OCEANIC 2000 (SPECIFY NIKONOS II, III/IV/V)	120.00
OCEANIC 2001 (SPECIFY NIKONOS II, III/IV,V)	295.00
OCEANIC 2003 WITH 2-POWER RANGES & EO	350.00
OCEANIC 3002 WITH AUTO FOR NIKONOS III, IV, V	549.00

SEA & SEA YS-20 FOR NIKONOS I/II	89.00
SEA & SEA YS-50 FOR NIKONOS III/IV/V	159.00
SEA & SEA YS-150 WITH SLAVE FOR NIKONOS III/IV/V	299.00

SUBSEA MK30 FOR NIKONOS III/IV/V	98.00
SUBSEA MK100 FOR NIKONOS III/IV/V	315.00
SUBSEAMK150 FOR NIKONOS III/IV/V	416.95

LIGHT METERS & HOUSINGS	
IKELITE HOUSING FOR GOSSEN SUPER PILOT	$ 39.95
SEA & SEA LIGHT METER	59.00
SEKONIC L-164B MARINE METER II	84.50
SEKONIC L-158WH METER WITH HOUSING	41.00
SEKONIC L-188WH METER WITH HOUSING	54.00

HOUSINGS



Helix Auto-Marine II Housing (see camera listing below)

HELIX AUTO-MARINE HOUSING II FOR NIKON L35AF	84.50
HELIX AUTO-MARINE HOUSING II FOR CANON AF35M	84.50
HELIX AUTO-MARINE HOUSING II FOR CANON AF35M2	84.50
HELIX AUTO-MARINE HOUSING II FOR CANON NL	84.50
HELIX/NIKON PACKAGE WITH HOUSING II & L35AF	209.50
HELIX/CANON PACKAGE WITH HOUSING II & AF35M2	209.50
U-FXP EWA FLEXIBLE HOUSING 9X6X7-1/2"	67.00
U-FXM, U-FPN, U-FGM EWA FLEXIBLE HOUSINGS	75.00
HELIX/KAMBA HOUSING FOR CANON "A" SERIES	299.50
HELIX/KAMBA MACRO OR EXTRAWIDE PORT	135.00
HUGYFOT UFOMARIN ALUMINUM HOUSING FOR OLYMPUS OM-1, OM-2	249.00
HUGYFOT AS ABOVE BUT FOR NIKON EM/FG	249.00
IKELITE HOUSING FOR CANON SUPER SURE SHOT	79.95
IKELITE HOUSING FOR NIKON F2/3 W/ACTIONFINDER	239.00
IKELITE HOUSING FOR CANON F1N W/SPEEDFINDER	239.00
IKELITE SUPEREYE HOUSING FOR SLR	279.95
IKELITE MOTORDRIVE SUPEREYE HOUSING	319.95
OCEANIC HYDRO 35 HOUSING FOR CANON F-1 (OLD STYLE) NIKON F, F2 OR F3	839.00
SEA & SEA ALUMINUM HOUSING FOR NIKON F2	695.00

110 & DISC CAMERAS	
HANIMEX AMPHIBIAN 110	$ 88.50
HANIMEX CLOSE-UP LENS FOR AMPHIBIAN 110	35.00
HANIMEX PKG WITH CAMERA & HANIMEX SLAVE STROBE & ARM	189.95
IKELITE HOUSING FOR KODAK DISC 2000, 3000 3100, 3500 & 4000	46.50
SEA & SEA POCKET MARINE 110	98.50
SEA & SEA MACRO LENS W/WAND	39.95
SEA & SEA/IKELITE PACKAGE WITH CAMERA, SUBSTROBE S & ARM	209.95
SEA & SEA PACKAGE WITH CAMERA, SEALOC BULKHEAD, YS-20 STROBE & ARM	239.00

SKIN DIVER SPECIAL

NIKONOS CLOSE-UP OUTFIT
$ 109.00
Mention this ad & save $ 20 OFF the regular price of $ 129.00.

35MM CAMERAS	
HANIMEX AMPHIBIAN 35MM	$ 157.50
HANIMEX PACKAGE WITH CAMERA & EXTERNAL SLAVE STROBE & ARM	252.50
SEA & SEA MOTOR MARINE W/METER	169.50
SEA & SEA/IKELITE PACKAGE W/CAMERA, SUBSTROBE S & ARM	267.00

EQUIPMENT CASES & BOXES	
AQUACRAFT "GOODY" BOX (3X5-1/2X8-1/2")	$ 6.95
HELIX CANVAS ACCESSORY TOTE (9X4X5")	4.95
PELICAN EQUIPMENT CASE (BLACK)	64.50
PELICAN BOX	11.95
PELICAN BOX WITH FOAM	14.40
SUBSEA EQUIPMENT CASE (18X13X8)	150.00
SUBSEA EQUIPMENT CASE (18X13X12)	165.00
HELIX LIGHTWEIGHT CASE	39.95

PHOTO/DIVE LIGHTS (NON-RECHARGEABLE CELLS NOT INCL.)	
HELIX HUP-200 PHOTO/DIVE LIGHT (2 "D" CELLS)	14.95
HELIX HUP-205 MINI DIVE LIGHTS (2 "AA" CELLS)	9.75
IKELITE MINI-C LIGHT (4 "C" CELLS)	15.95
IKELITE MINI-C HALOGEN LIGHT (4 "C" CELLS)	19.95
IKELITE MINI-C MARK STROBE BEACON	39.95
IKELITE MODULAR SUPER LIGHT IN CLEAR OR BLACK CASE (REQ. OPTIONAL CHARGER)	143.00
TOSHIBA K-133 W/SPARE HALOGEN (4 "D" CELLS)	28.95
TOSHIBA K-132 W/SPARE KRYPSTON (4 "D" CELLS)	24.95
UNDERWATER KINETICS SUPER-Q W/CHARGER	47.50
U-K QXL W/ CHARGER	59.00
DA-250 DARRELL ALLAN 10 "D" CELLS	35.00

MOVIE/VIDEO	
EUMIG NAUTICA S-8 (18 FPS)	$ 189.00
FUJICA P-2 WITH HOUSING (18 FPS)	99.00
IKELITE/CHINON PACKAGE WITH HOUSING & CHINON POCKET 8 CAMERA	119.00
IKELITE MODULAR 100W MOVIE LIGHT	143.00
IKELITE HOUSING FOR JVC GZ-S3 OR S5 & HR-C3	575.00
IKELITE HOUSING FOR JVC TM-P3U 3" MONITOR	199.95
IKELITE/JVC PACKAGE WITH HOUSING, GZ-S3, HR-C3, NI-CAD, CHARGER & TAPE	1945.00
IKELITE HOUSING FOR JVC GRC-1U/ZENITH VIDEOMOVIE	499.00
UNDERWATER KINETICS AQUA SUN SYSTEM WITH 40 DEGREE LAMP HEAD, POWER PACK & CHARGER	1050.00
SUBATEC 500 WATT UW CINE/VIDEO WITH 2 HEADS SYSTEM	995.00

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SUPER 8, REG. 8, 16MM TO VHS/BETA
SLIDES, NEGATIVES TO VHS/BETA
PRINTS, ENLARGEMENTS TO VHS/BETA
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FUJI/HELIX INTRO PKG. WITH FUJI P-2 MOVIE CAMERA, HOUSING, 4X FUJICHROME R25 FILM, PROCESSING, BETA OR VHS TAPE & UP TO 200' OF FILM TO VIDEO TRANSFER
$ 149.50

WARRANTIED USED EQUIPMENT	
NIKONOS III BODY (EXC.)	$ 275.00
NIKONOS IVA BODY (EXC.)	199.00
NIKONOS SB 101 FLASH (EXC.)	229.00
NIKONOS 28MM F3.5 UWN (EXC.)	139.00
NIKONOS 80MM OPTICAL VIEWFINDER (2/3)	49.95
AQUA-CRAFT EXT. TUBE W/FRAMER 1:2.75 FOR 28MM	35.00
IKELITE EXT. TUBE SET FOR 35MM	89.00
AMF SWIMASTER STROBE W/TRAY FOR NIKONOS III	89.50
HELIX IKELITE PKG. W/HELIX 102 STROBE & HSG	99.00
HONEYWELL 880 STROBE W/IKELITE HOUSING	159.00
IKELITE HOUSING FOR HONEYWELL 800, 880 & 882	99.00
IKELITE HOUSING FOR VIVITAR 192, 292	49.95
IKELITE HOUSING FOR VIVITAR 180, 181, 281	49.95
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SUBSEA MARK 30 (3/4/5)	99.00
IKELITE HOUSING FOR VIVITAR 800'S CAMERA	39.95
BOLEX ALUMINUM HOUSING FOR EBM	1595.00
IKELITE HOUSING FOR MAMIYA 645	299.00
IKELITE HOUSING WITH EO CONN. FOR CANON F-1 W/SPEEDFINDER	225.00
KONICA C-35 W/HOUSING & BULB FLASH	99.50
IKELITE HOUSING FOR GOSSEN SUPER PILOT	29.95
IKELITE TRAY FOR NIKONOS IV & I.C.S.	34.95
NIKONOS I W/35MM LENS (GOOD)	195.00
IKELITE HOUSED JVC VIDEO COMPLETE W/CAMERA, RECORDER	1694.00
NIKONOS 80MM F4.0 (MINT)	139.00
HANIMEX 35 AMPHIDIAN	139.00
IKELITE SUBSTROBE 150 W/CORD ICS	299.00

USED EQUIPMENT IS SOLD SUBJECT TO YOUR APPROVAL

BOOKS OF INTEREST

This full color book from "Skin Diver" magazine's "Fish of the Month" column is a detailed compilation certain to please amateurs and pros.



Book of Fishes by Hillary Hauser

SPECIAL! $ 22.50
(good through 6/31/85)

CALIFORNIA DIVE BOAT GUIDE & DIVER'S LOG	$ 4.95
DIVER'S ALMANAC, SCUBA DIVING ON THE WEST COAST	14.95
DIVER'S GUIDE TO ASIAN WATERS	15.00
DIVER'S GUIDE TO THE PHILIPPINES	11.95
DIVER'S GUIDE TO UNDERWATER AMERICA	14.95
DIVING AND SNORKELING GUIDE TO FLORIDA KEYS	8.95
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DIVING AND SNORKELING GUIDE TO BONAIRE, ARUBA, CURACAO	8.95
GUIDE TO THE BONAIRE MARINE PARK	14.95
GUIDE TO THE CURACAO UNDERWATER PARK	3.95
HOWARD HALL'S SUCCESSFUL UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY	12.95
THE JOY OF SNORKELING	8.95
MASTERING UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY	9.95
SCUBA EQUIPMENT CARE & MAINTENANCE	9.95
SAMANTHA	**19.95**
UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHER'S HANDBOOK (NATIONALLY ADVERTISED AT $22.50)	**12.95**

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Helix Photo Dive Trip! Australia
(Oct. 23 - Nov. 5, 1985)
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PARKWAY CAYMEN	189.95
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Extra Heavy Duty Waterproof Nylon Equipment Bag with paddedhandle, two end and one side expandable pockets and one inside pocket. *SPECIAL* ~~99.95~~ 49.95 Plus Shipping

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IC3-150 NAVIGATOR CPG, Oil Filled Depth Gauge & Compass	89.95
with Max Depth Recorder	99.95
ICL-150 DELUXE COMBO Combo CPG, Oil Filled Depth Gauge	79.95
with Max Depth Recorder	89.95
PRESSURE GAUGE	39.95
OCEANIC CPG & 150' Depth Guage	69.95

EXTRA SPECIAL

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PARKWAY Farmer John and Jacket	169.95
PARKWAY PLUSH Farmer John and Jacket	199.95

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POWER FINS

COMPETITION POWER FIN Open heel vented fin	19.95
THERMO PLASTIC POWER FIN Open heel vented fin	39.95

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PRICE GUARANTEE

We try to price our merchandise below the competition, but occasional we goof. If you find a current advertised price in *SKIN DIVER* lower than ours, give us a call and we'll match their price* *Plus* give you a **FREE** gift for purchasing from us.

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*RESTRICTIONS: Price Compairsion Adjustments must be requested when order is placed and are limited to in-stock merchandise. Prices apply only to orders placed by mail or telephone

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Use and operation of life support equipment should not be undertaken without qualified and proper instructions in their use. This ad does not imply the sale of life support equiptment through the mail.
*U.S. Divers Pro Line Jacket and Conshelf 20 are available for in-store purchase only

circle #285 on Reader Service Card

BAREFOOT SONG BOOK

The Barefoot Man's Typical Tropical Cruisin' Boozin' Song Book is 96 pages of island and scuba songs including music, words and chords. Many famous



tropical drink recipies are also included. The songbook ($7.50 plus $2 postage) is available from Barefoot Records, P.O. Box 1249, Grand Cayman, BWI.

SKI & SCUBA SPORTS

Ski & Scuba Sports of Westwood, NY is expanding its wreck diving schedule to include the 10 best wreck dives of New Jersey. There is also an extensive Caribbean vacation schedule. On May 3, 4, 5 the store will conduct a YMCA and PADI rescue dive weekend. For further information and registration for basic through instructor courses phone (201) 666-1323.

CA BOAT DIVING

Truth Aquatics, Sea Landing Breakwater, Santa Barbara, CA is offering trips aboard the *Truth* for beginning divers and others not familiar with dive boat procedures in the Channel Islands. On the trips the crew demonstrates such valuable techniques as: using a current line; how to board a boat in choppy seas; proper entries; and suiting up in swells. While the boat moves from one site to another the divers are briefed on how to handle the next dive.

The one day trips are scheduled for Wednesdays, through September. The *Truth* leaves Sea Landing Breakwater at 6:00 am and returns at 5:00 pm. Special rates are available for instructors with students. For reservations or more information telephone (805) 962-1127 or (805) 963-3564.

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(list $641) **CENTRAL SPECIAL $320.50**
Central Pays Shipping

CALL 516-826-8888 AND ASK FOR YOUR OWN CUSTOM PACKAGE DEAL
Use part of all or more than this list

REGULATOR _____
OCTOPUS _____
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STANDARD	**43″**	**PNEUMATIC**	(list $145)	**$114**
JUNIOR	**32″**	**PNEUMATIC**	(list $104)	**$109**
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Central pays shipping
DELUXE DRY SUIT $280
OTHER WET OR DRY SUITS AND SHORTIES FROM VIKING, PARKWAYS, US DIVERS, HENDERSON, HARVEY, ETC. ALWAYS ON SALE.



Values to $400

All prices are for mail order only
Store prices may vary.

CENTRAL SKINDIVERS is a full time, full line pro shop with an olympic size indoor pool. **CENTRAL** has been in business 34 years and our sales and service departments are familiar with every Scuba diving item made. We are not a warehouse or discount operation.

How do you like this month's special? This is just an example of **CENTRAL'S** low, low prices. WE GUARANTEE TO BEAT ANY ADVERTISED PRICE IN THIS MAGAZINE. Just ask for Peter, Bobby, Rich, Dan or Archie.

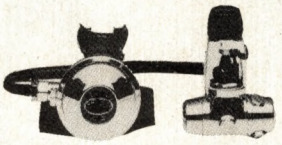
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"Travel" Kam Pack
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PACER 900 (list $240)	**$134**
CYKLON MAXIMUM (list $220)	**$149**
BALANCED DIAPHRAGM (list $175)	**$119**
BALANCED PISTON (list $180)	**$99**
OCTOPUS (long hose)	**$45**

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REGULATORS FROM US DIVERS, DACOR, SHERWOOD, SEAQUEST, TEKNA, OCEANIC, ETC., ALWAYS ON SALE

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Jet Type Blade
Vented Clear Plastic
Adjustable Straps
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NYLON 2-5 FINGER GLOVES ($35 list) **$21**
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GAUGES

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PRESSURE/DEPTH COMBO	**$75**
PRESSURE GAUGE	**$39**
FARALLON DEPTH	**$29**

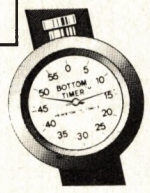
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WATCHES

SEIKO AUTOMATIC DAY DATE (list $165)	**$129**
CHRONOSPORT AUTOMATIC DATE (list $160)	**$125**
HEUER QUARTZ DATE (list $215)	**$159**
CHRONOSPORT GOLD QUARTZ (list $435)	**$335**
HEUER BLACK CORAL II (list $375)	**$289**
CHRONOSPORT U.D.T. STRAP (list $385)	**$299**

Central pays Shipping
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Luminous
Lifetime Warranty
Altitude Adjustable
BOTTOM TIMER $52
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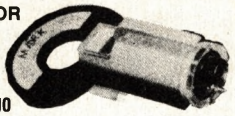
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Black w/ Blue Arms
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Underwater Life Support Systems are potentially dangerous to a non-trained user. These include scuba tanks, regulators and buoyancy compensators. This ad does not constitute an offer to sell these items via mail order.

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U/W HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Florida Skin Divers Association, Inc., will host the Underwater Hockey National Championships in West Palm Beach, Florida, June 7-9. Two men's teams and two women's teams from each member council of the Underwater Society of America may compete in the championships. The hockey will be played in the pool at Lake Lytal Park, on Gunclub Road between Kirk and Congress, in suburban West Palm Beach.

The players will stay at the Hilton Hotel, less than a mile from the pool, near the airport. United and Delta, the official airlines for the Underwater Hockey Championships, have guaranteed special roundtrip discounts. For information call, toll free, (800) 327-9687.

Arrangements will be made with local dive operators for special dive packages. Information about the tournament and the dive packages may be obtained from Tom Miller, Director of Underwater Hockey Competition of the Underwater Society of America, 1105 Helen, Deer Park, Texas 77536; (713) 476-4043.

NAUI COLLEGE COURSES

NAUI College has made available a series of extension course ITCs for those who live a considerable distance from California. Courses are scheduled for the Bahamas, Texas, Italy and Singapore as well as an alternative Southern California site closer to Los Angeles.

These are one and two week ITCs only and do not include the ten week Professional Instructor Course nor any specialty or specialty instructor courses. For further information on these courses as well as any of the school's course offerings, please contact the school's administrative office in Newport Beach, CA.

CO/CSWIP

The College of Oceaneering, Wilmington, CA has become the first school outside of Europe to receive official approval by CSWIP (Certification Scheme for Weldment Inspection Personnel). The underwater inspection and non-destructive testing course has been restructured to meet the stiff CSWIP qualifications. Upon graduation, a College of Oceaneering student can immediately take the CSWIP exam for diver inspection certification.

The College of Oceaneering designed a new six week course, ideally suited to experienced diving personnel and ROV operators or for those who have recently completed training at the college. The course meets or surpasses the training requirements and course approval for CSWIP, DnV (Det norske Veritas) and Lloyds (Register of London), in addition to the ASNT, (American Society of Nondestructive Testing), approval already granted to CO.

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Nikonos V, 35mm lens, Small Whale bag, QXL lite, O-ring removal tools $404.00
Nikonos V, 35mm lens, Whale Strobe TTL-II Complete, QXL lite & holder, Whale bag $695.00
Nikonos V, 35mm lens, Whale Strobe TTL-II Complete, Extension Tubes (1:1, 1:2, 1:3), O-Ring tools $729.00
Nikonos V, 35mm lens, Whale Strobe TTL-II Complete, 28mm & Closeup Adapter Lenses, QXL Light, Light Holder, O-Ring Tools, "Successful U/W Photog." $769.00

Beginner

Ewa Housing for Autofocus Cameras $37.95
Disc-Case & Keystone 1050 Camera, Lens, Mount, Finder $79.50
Hanimex 110 Amphibian Camera $89.50
Hanimex 35mm Amphibian Camera $157.50
Hanimex Flash for 35mm Amphibian $98.95
Close-up Lens for Hanimex $43.95
Substrobe S for Ikelite Disc Cases (slave conn.) $94.95
"Disc Underwater Photography" $4.95
"110 Underwater Photo Book" $4.95
"Divers & Cameras", Strykowski $5.95
"Choosing And Using U/W Strobes", Church - New $6.50
"Successful U/W Photography", Hall $12.95

Learn U/W Photography With Four-In-One Slide Show-
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Whale Bag, 18"x13"x10", Sea Blue or Burgundy $59.95
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FINALLY! An Underwater carry-all that holds lenses, framing, camera
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Nikonos SB-102 $45 per week
Whale Strobe TTL-II $25 per week
Nikkor 15mm f/2.8 lens $75 per week
JVC VHS Video System $210 per week

AFFORDABLE TTL Whale Strobe TTL-II



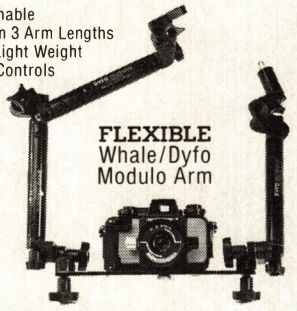
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Nikonos DF-11 15mm Viewfinder $159.00
Creata Singh Ray Marine Filter (for reds w/o strobe) $39.95
Nikonos Rigid Lens Hood/Filter Holder $4.50
Creata Macro 5 Closeup Lens w/Framer $49.95
Creata Extension Tube Set (1:1, 1:2, 1:3) $79.95
Creata 35mm Extension Tube, Framer (Specify 1:1, 1:2, or 1:3) $27.95
Hydro Photo Closeup Lens (Specify T1, T2, or T3) $43.50
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Creata Wide Eye 20mm Wide Angle Adapter . . . $199.95
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Creata 28/35 Optical Viewfinder $47.95
Ikelite Substrobe M, Arm, Tray, Mini-C Lite, Holder, Nik 3/4/5 Cord $164.95
Subsea Mark 30 w/Nik conn. $139.95
Ikelite Substrobe 150 w/o charger or cord. . . . $354.95
Oceanic 2001 Strobe w/Nik 3/4/5 Cord $329.95
Creata Nikonos to EO Adapter (Specify Nik 2 or 3/4/5) $51.95
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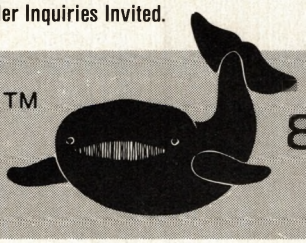
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DIVER OF THE YEAR

NAUI's national training director, Walt Hendrick, Sr., is the recipient of the 1985 Walter Feinberg Diver of the Year Award from the Boston Sea Rovers. The award was presented at the annual International Underwater Clinic in Boston.

Hendrick's many accomplishments and contributions to sport diving during his more than 30 years of diving, some 20 of them as a NAUI instructor, were cited during the award presentation. Included were his experiences and activities in Puerto Rico, where he initiated the first Caribbean dive resort and resort dive course. He established the only civilian recompression chamber at Concepcion Hospital, where he supervised all treatments for 12 years, as part of his responsibilities as the diving officer for the Graduate School of Marine Sciences, University of Puerto Rico.

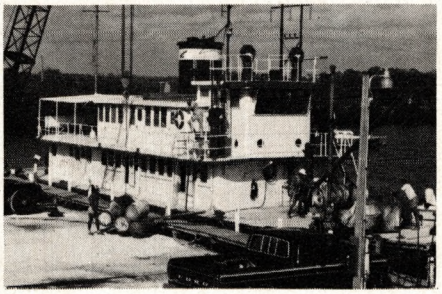
FLORIDA DOWN UNDER

Florida Down Under, Inc. is a new, full service professional dive store at 773 Venice By-Pass S., Venice, Florida 33595; telephone (813) 484-DIVE. There is a 24 hour recorded information number: (813) 371-5864.

Florida Down Under is a PADI International Training Facility, offering the complete PADI educational system as well as 15 specialty courses. PADI instructor specialty courses are also offered.

MOBILE TEACHING FACILITY

Manatee Bay Marine, in Key Largo, Florida, now has available a 243 ton self-contained teaching facility called the M/V *Goldenrod*. The vessel's shallow draft (4.5 feet) and large displacement make it an ideal diving platform for a variety of shallow and deep water habitats in the Keys and Bahamas. The vessel has sleeping accommodations, galley, lecture room, unlimited air supply and security for parked vehicles. The M/V *Goldenrod* allows instructors to teach a variety of diving classes at sea without the loss of transit time to and from dive sites.



The program director is Dr. George M. Simmons, Jr. who also is conducting an active research program in the Key Largo National Marine Sanctuary. He can be contacted at P.O. Box 2781, Key Largo, FL 33037; (305) 451-4177.

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QUARRY DIVING BOOKLET

Douglas Campbell is producing a booklet designed to acquaint divers with the fun and special safety requirements of quarry diving. The final chapter is to include a listing of quarries open to divers. Campbell is asking divers around the country to submit information on the location of quarries, facilities available, items of interest, etc. Please contact Douglas Campbell, 6203 Yellowstone Dr., Alexandria, VA 22312.

JANTZEN SWEEPSTAKES

Jantzen has launched a $75,000 sweepstakes in 26 markets to promote its 1985 collection of men's bikinis. Grand prize in each market is a diving adventure in the Cayman Islands and includes roundtrip transportation for two via Cayman Airways and full accommodations for four days at Spanish Cove. Other major prizes include the new Nikonos V, a Heuer chronograph, Dacor snorkeling gear and a Jantzen diver's wardrobe.

Jantzen has provided participating retailers with entry forms, official entry box and a specially commissioned sweepstakes poster by artist Scott McIntire.

ADVENTURE BOOKS COVER

Adventure Books is seeking a cover photograph for its next catalog. The company is looking for previously unpublished photographs of underwater archaeologists at work, of divers exploring sunken ships or of divers engaged in any kind of serious underwater exploration. Photographers are encouraged to submit two high quality five by seven inch black and white glossies of each photograph together with an appropriate caption of not more than 100 words to Adventure Books, 2 Coachmen's Square, New Canaan, CT 06840. The winning photographer will receive $100 and credit for his or her work in the next catalog. Those photographs not selected will be returned to their owners if they also send a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Entries must be received by August 31. Photographers wishing to see a typical cover photograph used by Adventure Books should send a check for $1.50 to the above address.

CALIF. SPORT DIVERS

California Sport Divers is a new club based in the San Francisco Bay area. Its goals are the promotion of safe and fun diving and the encouragement of diver education. The club meets at 7:00 pm on the first Wednesday of each month at the Peninsula Diving Center, 1015 West El Camino Real, Mountain View, CA.

For more information contact California Sport Divers, P.O. Box 4008, Mountain View, CA 94040.

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Watersports Suits from 39.95
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Nylon II Molded Sole Boots 26.50
Nylon II Five-Finger Gloves 14.95
Nylon II ¼" Three Finger Mitts . . 22.50
Parkway Thermopro Suit 525.00

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Jacket Style B.C. with inflator & backpack 129.95
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Most Popular DM50 or DM51 Low Volume Mask 28.50
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U.S. Divers Nordic Knife 14.95
Wenoka Divers Tool 26.50
New England Divers Large Equipment Bag 35.00
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Underwater Kinetics UK600 Rechargeable 65.00
Medium Catch Bag 6.95
Break-apart Travel Spear and Case 45.00
Break-Apart Float & Flag 15.95

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Miami, FL 33015
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(305) 573-4600

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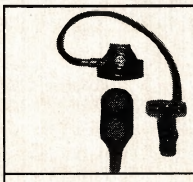
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PACKAGE M1 — Parkway atlas regulator with pressure gauge. Retail $265.00 **Sale $159.95**



PACKAGE M2 — Pacer 900 regulator with pressure/Maximum depth gauge console. Retail $400.00 **Sale $219.95**



PACKAGE M3 — Waterlung X3 regulator, pressure gauge, and Trinidad Jacket B.C.D. with power and pack. Retail $426.00 **Sale $259.95**



Package M4 — Waterlung X2 balanced regulator, Pressure/Depth console, and Malibu Jacket B.C.D. with power and pack. Retail $575.00 **Sale $349.95**



PACKAGE M5 — Poseidon Cyklon 300 regulator, Pressure/Depth console, and the model B.C.T. Jacket B.C. with power and pack. Retail $695.00 **Sale $409.95**



CHRONOSPORT — Champagne Sea Quartz 1000, model #3405 (Men's) or #3905 (Women's). Attractive gold body, bezel and bracelet, with dark blue face. Quartz movement, date. Retail $495.00 **Sale $395.00**



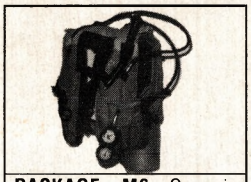
HEUER — Model #980.006 Quartz watch features a stainless steel body, date, rotating bezel, locking crown, tropic strap, and more! Retail $250.00 **Sale $199.95**



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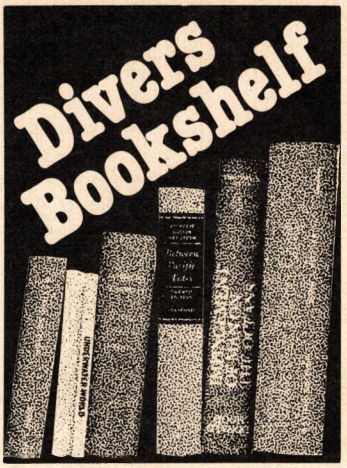
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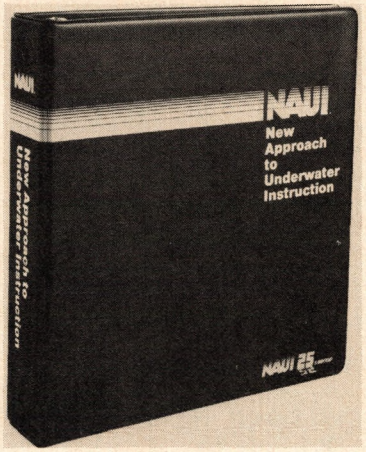
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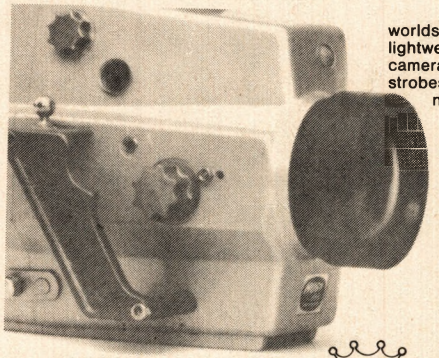
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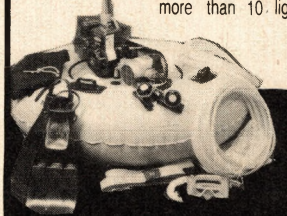
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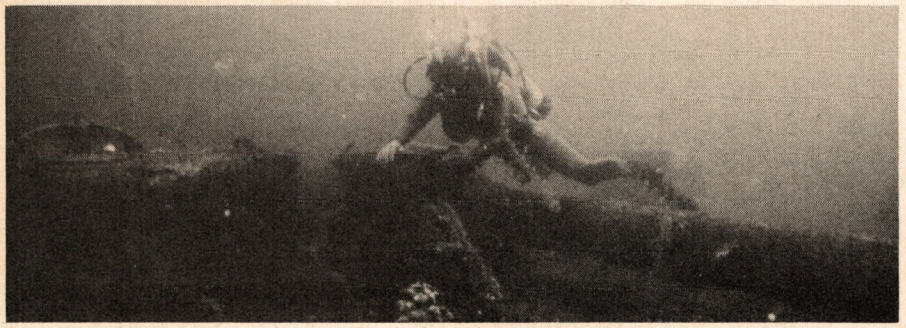


Saga Of The Byron D. Benson

photo/courtesy Mariners' Museum



photos/ William H. Hughes



BY WILLIAM H. HUGHES

In March 1942, Captain John McMillian knew that German U-boats had reached the United States East Coast shipping lanes. In spite of U.S. Navy censorship, no one could conceal the oil-stained beaches or the daily arrival of lifeboats full of survivors. To even the untrained eye, it was obvious German U-boats had taken control of our coastal waters. It is reasonable to assume that Captain McMillian's voice was laced with just a little remorse as he gave the order for the S.S. *Byron D. Benson* to cast off.

The *Benson* was a 7,953 gross ton tanker built in 1921. Owned by the Tidewater Associated Oil Company, she was 465 feet long with a beam of 60 feet. She drew 36 feet of water when in ballast. Under favorable conditions her speed was 9-11 knots.

The *Benson* set sail from Port Arthur, Texas on March 27, 1942 for Bayonne, New Jersey with a cargo of 100,000 barrels of crude oil. Captain McMillian immediately started zigzagging and alternating speed to make his ship a difficult target. At 1700 hours on April 4, the third mate, Jack Vanderwode, announced, "Hatteras astern." Normally, McMillian would have uttered a sigh of relief to be clear of the treacherous shoals, but not tonight. They had just entered an area where U-boats were always on station. Attacks were so common in this bottleneck the press had named it Torpedo Junction.

On March 7, 1942 the 750 ton *U-552* left the occupied French port of St. Nazaire for patrol off the East Coast of the United States. She was a type VII C, the most popular German combat submarine ever built. Equipped with five torpedo tubes and an 8.8 cm deck gun, she was quite capable of fulfilling her mission of death and destruction. For several weeks she patrolled the waters off New England and New Jersey. On April 3 her commander, Kapitanleutnant Eric Topp, radioed the following report to German Admiral Donitz: "No traffic for three days off Cape Cod. Very heavy traffic by day between Cape May and Cape Henry along buoys, stopped at night. Effective sea and air patrols. High pressure weather condition for eight days. Branching off for Hatteras. Favorable attacking position: Wimbel Shoals and Raleigh Bay." He also added that he had sunk two ships for a total of 8,694 gross tons.

The *Benson* was proceeding through Torpedo Junction, escorted by two ships, the tanker *Gulf of Mexico* and the armed British trawler H.M.S. *Norwich City*. Three men were on lookout: one seaman on the bow, the captain and the third mate on the bridge. The sky was overcast and the seas calm as a slight breeze blew two points off the starboard bow. Not thinking, they made the fatal error of letting their escort fall astern.

By April 4, Topp had his gray wolf in position off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. As a cloak of darkness fell, he surfaced to charge his batteries and engage in the evening's predatory activities. The *U-552* was proceeding on the surface when a lookout spotted the *Benson* running blacked out, yet silhouetted against a bright western sky. Her course and speed were plotted and fed into the analog torpedo computer.

At 9:40 pm, about eight miles off the Currituck Inlet Whistle Buoy No. 6, a single torpedo struck the *Benson* amidship, on the starboard side between tanks number seven and eight. A large hole was blown from below the water line to

the main deck. Fire immediately broke out and covered the entire starboard side of the ship, burning lifeboats one and three. The *Benson* continued underway, but bore off to starboard, spewing burning oil aft.

The crew was well versed in lifeboat launching, owing to frequent drills and wasted no time in demonstrating it. The chief engineer and 26 crew members took to lifeboat four, which hung aft on the port side of the ship. One crew member missed this boat but was able to launch a life raft and escape. The captain and eight other members of the crew launched the forward port lifeboat two, but it was soon engulfed by burning oil and they were never seen again.

The 27 men in the lifeboat were picked up by the destroyer U.S.S. *Hamilton*, about an hour and 45 minutes later. The sailor in the life raft was picked up by the H.M.S. *Norwich City*. All were then transferred to Norfolk, Virginia. In the haste of their departure, no one bothered to shut the *Benson's* engines down. She steamed on for a time and finally was observed on April 6, completely engulfed in flames, yet still afloat. On the afternoon of April 7 the S.S. *Byron D. Benson* finally sank, 28 miles northeast of Oregon Inlet, off Nags Head, in 95 feet of water.

On April 10 Commander Topp radioed the following report to the U-boat headquarters in France: "Further successes: tanker 10,000 gross tons, full. British *Splendour*, 7,138 gross tons, tanker 8,000 gross tons, full. Tanker 10,000 gross tons, full. Freighter 14,000 gross tons torpedoed, inside explosion heard soon after. Sinking not observed." By the time he returned to France on April 27 Topp had sunk a total of seven ships in United States coastal waters. Kapitanleutnant Topp would go on to be the third leading U-boat ace of the war with 34 ships sunk for a total of 193,684 tons. Unlike many of his peers, Topp and the *U-552* survived the war. She was finally scuttled off Wilhelmshaven, Germany in May of 1945, as part of the British operation known as Dead Light.

Today, the *Benson* is still completely intact and sitting upright on the bottom with a slight list to her starboard side. She provides for a diversity of divers' interests, yet owing to her proximity to the *U-85* the *Benson* is often overlooked. Underwater photographers love to use her variety of machinery, hatchways and huge valves as backdrops. Souvenir hunters rejoice in a gold mine of brass goodies. During two dives on the *Benson*, I witnessed a dive club from Baltimore, Maryland remove at least 125 pounds of brass light fixtures, valves and a large hatch cover. Visibility is usually good to excellent and during my dives it extended beyond 60 feet. The decks can be reached at 70 and 80 feet, which allows for a reasonable amount of bottom time. Her well preserved state allows easy navigation by novice divers.

Through the violence of her death, the *Benson* has become an object of beauty and life. On a flat, desert-like bottom, she is a veritable oasis of life. Huge schools of amberjack and dolphinfish circle the wreck. Sea bass and other sport fish make their home in her ports and passage ways. If you have always wanted to dive a shipwreck similar to those in Hollywood movies, make a dive on the *Benson*. Charters can be arranged through Nags Head Divers, Inc., at P.O. Box 665, Nags Head, North Carolina; telephone (919) 441-7594.

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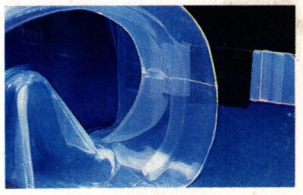
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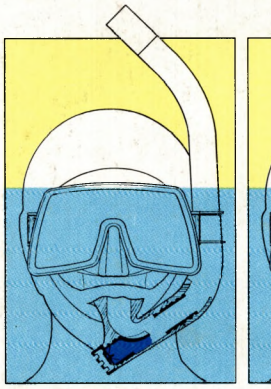




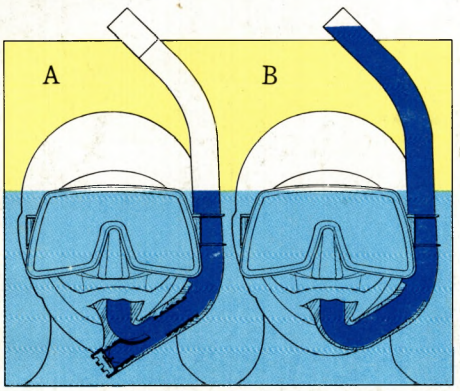
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